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2011 ALABAMA

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“Everything you need to know about setting up, marketing and managing the revenue of your business.”

5 Ways To Evaluate Your Strengths and Weaknesses

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Entrepreneurs and small business owners like you continue to create jobs and drive our economy forward. This resource guide has everything you need to know about the tools and resources that SBA has to offer: from getting an SBA loan, to

securing a federal contract, to using our extensive network of 14,000 SBA-affiliated counselors. Through these “3 Cs” of capital, contracts and counseling, we help thousands of people every day.

The new Small Business Jobs Act that President Obama signed a few months ago strengthens SBA's efforts in each of these areas. For example, we permanently raised the top SBA loan sizes in our two most popular programs from \$2 million to \$5 million. Also, the Jobs Act strengthens the federal government's ability to ensure that more small businesses can compete for federal contracts on a level playing field.

In addition, we recently overhauled www.sba.gov. Now you can find information about SBA programs more quickly than ever before. At the same time, we beefed up our

social media presence. I encourage you to check out the latest SBA news by joining our communities on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Through these new online tools, we are more directly engaged in a dialogue with the small business community to learn how SBA can do even more to help you grow your business.

The fact is, about two of every three jobs created in America each year come from small businesses, and more than half of working Americans own or work for a small business. With your help, we can make sure the SBA is meeting its mission and that small businesses like yours will continue to grow and lead our nation to full economic recovery, as they've done throughout U.S. history.

If you have any questions that aren't answered in this guide, please go to www.sba.gov, or call or walk in to your local district office. We stand ready to help you in whatever way we can.

Warm regards,

Karen G. Mills

Administrator

Small Business Administration

About the SBA

www.sba.gov

Your Small Business Resource

Every year, the U.S. Small Business Administration and its nationwide network of partners help millions of potential and current small business owners start, grow and succeed.

Resources and programs targeting small businesses provide an advantage necessary to help small businesses effectively compete in the marketplace and strengthen the overall U.S. economy.

SBA offers help in the following areas:

- *Starting a Business*
- *Financing a Business*

- *Growing a Business*
- *Opportunities in Contracting*
- *Recovering From Disaster*
- *A Voice for Small Business in Government*

Visit SBA online at www.sba.gov for 24/7 access to small business news, information and training for entrepreneurs.

All SBA programs and services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Strengthening Alabama's Economy, One Small Business at a Time.



The Alabama Small Business Development Center (ASBDC) Network provides management and technical assistance to help entrepreneurs start new businesses or expand existing small businesses.

We have professional business counselors at a location near you:

Alabama A&M University • Alabama State University • Auburn University
Jacksonville State University • Troy University • The University of Alabama
University of Alabama in Huntsville • University of North Alabama
University of South Alabama • University of West Alabama

SPECIALTY PROGRAMS:

Alabama International Trade Center
Procurement Technical Assistance Center Program

www.asbdc.org

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Rules For Success

Like today's small businesses, large corporate success stories started with only an entrepreneur and a dream.

Success in business requires training and discipline and hard work. But if you're not frightened by these things, the opportunities are just as great today as they ever were.
David Rockefeller

Virtually every business, large and small, has been affected by the recent and continuing difficult economic climate. Small businesses are especially affected, because they typically have less cash reserves and smaller margins than larger firms.

True economic recovery—and growth—will continue to occur, as always, in the local communities, as a partnership between lenders, borrowers and technical assistance providers. If you have a dream or an idea for a business, the SBA and our Resource Partners are here to help.

Those interested in starting a business can still do so—they just really need to do their homework, and seek out mentors and trusted advisors. Entrepreneurs interested in a start-up need to develop the best business plan, marketing plan and financial growth plan they can. They can get no-cost assistance developing these plans from the network of Small Business Centers, Women's Business Centers and SCORE Chapters (Service Corps of Retired Executives) located throughout Alabama.

In making a decision where to locate a business, they might consider Historically Underutilized Business Zones. The HUBZone program establishes preferences for award of federal contracts to small businesses located in these zones. In general, small businesses may obtain HUBZone certification by employing staff who live in a HUBZone and maintaining a "principal office" in one of these specially designated areas. If that location otherwise makes good business sense, the HUBZone status can be an added benefit.

Anyone needing assistance or who has questions about SBA programs or services can go to www.sba.gov/al or call the Alabama District Office at 205-290-7101. Our experienced and dedicated staff are here to assist in any way we can. Best wishes for all success!

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Todt

*District Director of
SBA's Alabama District Office*

*Drive thy business or it will drive thee.
Benjamin Franklin*

Doing Business in Alabama

■ The SBA helps business owners grow and expand their businesses every day.



THE ALABAMA DISTRICT OFFICE

The Alabama District Office is responsible for the delivery of SBA's many programs and services. The District Director is Thomas Todt. The District Office is located at 801 Tom Martin Drive, Suite 201, Birmingham, AL 35211. Office hours are from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

The SBA also has an Alternate Work Site located in Mobile, AL. Brent McMahan is Senior Area Manager for the Mobile area. Mr. McMahan can be reached at 251-544-7401 or via email at: brent.mcmahan@sba.gov.

CONTACTING THE ALABAMA DISTRICT OFFICE

For program and service information, please contact the Alabama District Office at 205-290-7101.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Financial assistance for new or existing businesses through guaranteed loans made by area bank and non-bank lenders.

Free counseling, advice and information on starting, better operating or expanding a small business through the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE),

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and Women's Business Centers (WBC). They also conduct training events throughout the district - some require a nominal registration fee.

Assistance to businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals through the Business Development Program.

A Women's Business Ownership Representative is available to assist women business owners. For more information go to the website: www.cawbc.org or www.onlinewbc.org.

Special loan programs are available for businesses involved in international trade.

For information concerning an existing SBA Disaster loan, please contact the Birmingham Disaster Home Loan Servicing Center at 800-736-6048 or 205-290-7141.



One small business owner is not overly concerned about a slumping U.S. economy or slower domestic sales. Mrs. Kathy Green, owner of Creative Concepts in Irondale, Alabama, says export sales are helping them weather the current economic storm in the U.S.

Creative Concepts, which produces "Pucker Powder" brand candy in 13 sour and 5 sweet flavors, also manufactures a unique interactive dispensing machine that lets kids of all ages design their own tasty concoctions. These machines have been installed in candy stores, movie theatres, convenience stores, water parks, video stores and even a few zoos. Given the broad appeal of this creative candy concept, it was only a matter of time before foreign companies took notice.

SUCCESS STORY

Creative Concepts d/b/a Pucker Powder

Kathy Green, Owner

In 2007, Kathy began receiving several foreign inquiries for her "Pucker Powder" candy and dispensing system, but she was unsure how to respond, and skeptical about some of the inquiries that arrived via their website. That's when Creative Concepts turned to the Alabama International Trade Center, a partnership program between the U.S. Small Business Administration and the University of Alabama, for help.

Kathy, her husband Scott, and marketing guru Mark Cline have taken the initiative to travel overseas, attend confectionery trade shows, and meet with prospective customers. To date Creative Concepts has signed up six foreign distributors, and sells to a dozen different countries throughout Europe, Asia/Pacific, and

We Welcome Your Questions

For extra copies of this publication or questions please contact:

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ALABAMA SBDC NETWORK



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Acting State Director of the Alabama
SBDC Network



Alabama Small Business Resource Partners



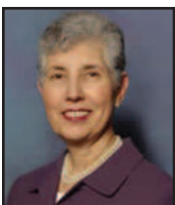
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- - SBDC
- △ - WBC
- - SCORE

Building Your Small Business In Alabama May Be Your Brightest Idea Yet.



Alabama Office of Small Business Advocacy

Let us provide you with the tools to help you
start or expand your small business in Alabama.

Resources Include:

- * Small Business Resource Provider Listings (Federal, State, Regional)
- * Catalog of Current Small Business Publications
 - * Statewide Business Incubator Listing
- * Statewide Small Business Calendar of Events
- * Current Small Business News Articles
- * Small Business Spotlight

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Visit our website:
www.alabamausa.org
Click on Small Business Link

INTRODUCTION

GETTING STARTED

The SBA Can Help You Start and Expand Your Business



Every year, the U.S. Small Business Administration and its nationwide network of resource partners help millions of potential and existing small business owners start, grow and succeed.

Whether your target market is global or just your neighborhood, the SBA and its resource partners can help at every stage of turning your entrepreneurial dream into a thriving business.

If you're just starting, the SBA and its resources can help you with loans and business management skills. If you're already in business, you can use the SBA's resources to help manage and expand your business, obtain government contracts, recover from disaster, find foreign markets, and make your voice heard in the federal government.

You can access SBA information online 24 hours a day at www.sba.gov or visit one of our local offices for assistance.

SBA's Online Training

SBA provides small businesses with free online courses, workshops, learning tools and business-readiness assessments.

Key Features of the Small Business Training Network:

Training is available anytime and anywhere—all you need is a computer with Internet access.

- More than 20 free online courses and workshops available.
- Online, interactive assessment tools are featured and used to direct clients to appropriate training.

Course topics include a financial primer keyed around SBA's loan-guarantee programs, a course on exporting, and courses for veterans and women seeking federal contracting opportunities, as well as an online library of business publications and articles.

Find the SBTN at www.sba.gov/training.

Where To Go To Get Started

Our resources include the SBA's district offices serving every state and territory, over 350 chapters of SCORE – Counselors to America's Small Businesses, approximately 900 Small Business Development Centers, approximately 110 Women's Business Centers and 16 Veterans Business Outreach Centers located across the

country. To find your local district office or SBA resource partner, visit www.sba.gov/sba-direct.

These professionals can also help with writing a formal business plan, locating sources of financial assistance, managing and expanding your business, finding opportunities to sell your goods or services to the government, and recovering from disaster.

SBA'S RESOURCE PARTNERS

SCORE

SCORE is a national network of more than 12,000 entrepreneurs, business leaders and executives who volunteer as mentors to America's small business. SCORE helps entrepreneurs start businesses, grow companies and create jobs in local communities.

SCORE matches you with a mentor whose personality and skills are a good fit for your business needs. Whether you are a start-up business or growing company, you can meet with a mentor for free and confidential advice.

SCORE mentors are part of your local community. The volunteer experts understand local business licensing rules, economic conditions and lending standards. You will find a SCORE office in your community and often a location at your local Chamber of Commerce, bank or SBA office.

SCORE mentoring is available at over 350 offices nationwide. SCORE offers local small business workshops at modest fees on popular topics such as increasing sales, managing cash flow and marketing your business.

ON THE UPSIDE

It's true, there are a lot of reasons not to start your own business. But for the right person, the advantages of business ownership far outweigh the risks.

- You get to be your own boss.
- Hard work and long hours directly benefit you, rather than increasing profits for someone else.
- A new venture is exciting.
- Earnings and growth potential are unlimited.
- Running a business will provide endless variety, challenge and opportunities to learn.

EVALUATE

Start by evaluating your strengths and weaknesses

1. Are you a self-starter?

It will be up to you – not someone else telling you – to develop projects, organize your time and follow through on details.

2. How well do you get along with different personalities?

Business owners need to develop working relationships with a variety of people including customers, vendors, staff, bankers, lawyers, accountants and consultants. Can you deal with a demanding client, an unreliable vendor or a cranky staff person?

3. How good are you at making decisions?

Small business owners are required to make decisions constantly, often quickly, under pressure.

4. Do you have the physical and emotional stamina to run a business?

Business ownership can be challenging, fun and exciting. But it's also a lot of hard work. Can you face 12-hour workdays six or seven days a week?

5. How well do you plan and organize?

Research indicates many business failures could have been avoided through better planning. Good organization – of financials, inventory, schedules, production – can help avoid pitfalls.

SCORE has helped more than 8.5 million entrepreneurs nationwide. You can count on SCORE as a trusted resource to offer in-depth mentoring, sound advice and guidance to tools and resources that can help you succeed as a business owner.

For 24/7 access to advice and online webinars on topics such as starting, growing, marketing and e-commerce for small business, visit SCORE online. With expertise in more than 600 skill areas, you can find a SCORE mentor online at www.score.org or at one of SCORE's offices. Call 1-800-634-0245 for the office nearest you.

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SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

The Small Business Development Center program has been vital to SBA's entrepreneurial outreach for more than 25 years. It has become one of the largest professional small business management and technical assistance networks in the nation. With nearly 900 locations across the country, SBDCs offer existing and future entrepreneurs free one-to-one expert business advice and low-cost trainings. All counseling and training sessions are conducted by qualified small business professionals and many are offered online.

A nationwide study of the impact of the SBDC program highlights the results of SBDC assistance. The study illustrates the significance of the SBDC program's focus on establishing long-term counseling relationships with clients. Of the clients surveyed, more than 80 percent reported that the information they received from their SBDC counselor was valuable. Similarly, more than 50 percent reported that SBDC assistance was useful with the decision to start a business. More than 40 percent of long-term clients, those receiving 5 hours or more of counseling, reported an increase in sales and 38 percent of long term clients reported an increase in profit margins.

SBDC counseling generally consists of assistance with business plans, access to capital, franchising, manufacturing, international trade, high-tech endeavors, contracting, energy efficiency, marketing, technology and other growth strategies. SBDC training is geared toward the needs of the local business community, focusing on the fundamentals required to start, purchase, operate and grow a small business.

Particular emphasis in the SBDC program includes green business technology, disaster recovery and preparedness, importing and exporting, electronic commerce, technology transfer and regulatory compliance. A number of SBDC network have specialized programs or centers dedicated to technology assistance and/or international trade. The SBDC programs also promote green buildings and green job growth, provide assistance to veterans and communities affected by defense cutbacks, and reach out to communities that have been negatively affected by industry cutbacks, closures or natural disasters.

During the past quarter century, through a unique mix of federal funding

along with matching state and private sector resources, the program has increased its return on investment. Through federal grants, the SBDCs in every state and territory provide the foundation for the economic growth of small businesses. These small businesses in turn advance local and regional economic development through the generation of business revenues, job creation and job retention. In fiscal 2010, SBDC business advisors helped more than 13,600 entrepreneurs start new businesses or roughly 37 new business starts per day.

The SBDC network provided counseling services to over 107,000 nascent entrepreneurs, approximately 101,000 existing businesses and training services to approximately 380,000 clients in fiscal 2010.

In fiscal 2010, SBDC clients acquired loans, venture capital and the infusion of equity totaling \$3.8 billion, an increase over the \$3.6 billion SBDC clients obtained in fiscal 2008 and in 2009. Of the \$3.8 billion in capital obtained by SBDC clients, over 19% took the form of SBA guaranteed loans with 81% in capital acquired from banks and conventional lenders as well as angel investors and venture capitalists.

For information on the SBDC program, visit www.sba.gov/sbdc.

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WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS

The SBA's Women Business Center program is a network of approximately 110 community-based centers which provide business training, counseling, mentoring and other assistance geared toward women, particularly those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. While the services are focused on women, approximately 30% of the WBC clients are men. WBCs are located in nearly every state and U.S. territory and are partially funded through a cooperative agreement with the SBA.

To meet the needs of women entrepreneurs, the WBCs offer services at convenient times and locations, including weekends. Many WBCs are located at non-profit host organizations that offer a wide variety of services in addition to the services provided by the WBC. Many of the WBCs also offer training and counseling and provide materials in different languages in order to meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve.

In fiscal year 2010, the WBC program counseled and trained more than 160,000 clients, creating local economic growth and vitality.

WBCs often deliver their services through long term training or group counseling, both of which have shown to be effective. WBC training courses are often free or are offered at a small fee. Some centers will also offer scholarships based on the client's needs. While most WBCs are physically located in one designated location, a number of WBCs also provide courses and counseling via the Internet, mobile classrooms and satellite locations.

To find the nearest SBA WBC or to learn more about SBA programs and services, visit www.sba.gov/women.

MICROLOAN PROGRAM INTERMEDIARIES

The Microloan program is operated through a network of approximately 160 intermediaries nationwide. It provides business based training and technical assistance to very small "microbusinesses" –10 employees or

fewer – that are interested in starting or growing their businesses. Such training and technical assistance includes general business education, business planning training, industry-specific training, and other support for new and growing microbusinesses. Microloan program intermediaries also provide small business loans of up to \$50,000. The program is available to women, low-income, minority, and veteran entrepreneurs and others interested in starting a microbusiness.

ARE YOU RIGHT FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERSHIP?

Most new business owners who succeed have planned for every phase of their success. Thomas Edison, the great American inventor, once said, “Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.” That same philosophy also applies to starting a business.

First, you’ll need to generate a little bit of perspiration deciding whether you’re the right type of person to start your own business.

IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR YOU?

There is simply no way to eliminate all the risks associated with starting a small business, but you can improve your chances of success with good planning, preparation, and insight. Start by evaluating your strengths and weaknesses as a potential owner and manager of a small business. Carefully consider each of the following questions:

- **Are you a self-starter?** It will be entirely up to you to develop projects, organize your time, and follow through on details.
- **How well do you get along with different personalities?** Business owners need to develop working relationships with a variety of people including customers, vendors, staff, bankers, employees, and professionals such as lawyers, accountants, or consultants. Can you deal with a demanding client, an unreliable vendor, or a cranky receptionist if your business interests demand it?
- **How good are you at making decisions?** Small business owners are required to make decisions constantly – often quickly, independently, and under pressure.
- **Do you have the physical and emotional stamina to run a business?** Business ownership can be exciting, but it’s also a lot of work. Can you face six or seven 12-hour workdays every week?

- **How well do you plan and organize?** Research indicates that poor planning is responsible for most business failures. Good organization — of financials, inventory, schedules, and production — can help you avoid many pitfalls.

- **Is your drive strong enough?** Running a business can wear you down emotionally. Some business owners burn out quickly from having to carry all the responsibility for the success of their business on their own shoulders. Strong motivation will help you survive slowdowns and periods of burnout.

- **How will the business affect your family?** The first few years of business start-up can be hard on family life. It’s important for family members to know what to expect and for you to be able to trust that they will support you during this time. There also may be financial difficulties until the business becomes profitable, which could take months or years. You may have to adjust to a lower standard of living or put family assets at risk.

Once you’ve answered those questions, you should consider what type of business you want to start. Businesses can include franchises, at-home businesses, online businesses, brick-and-mortar stores or any combination of those.

FRANCHISING

There are more than 3,000 business franchises. The challenge is to decide on one that both interests you and is a good investment. Many franchising experts suggest that you comparison shop by looking at multiple franchise opportunities before deciding on the one that’s right for you.

Some of the things you should look at when evaluating a franchise: historical profitability, effective financial management and other controls, a good image, integrity and commitment, and a successful industry.

In the simplest form of franchising, while you own the business, its operation is governed by the terms of the franchise agreement. For many, this is the chief benefit for franchising. You are able to capitalize on a business format, trade name, trademark and/or support system provided by the franchisor. But you operate as an independent contractor with the ability to make a profit or sustain a loss commensurate with your ownership.

If you are concerned about starting an independent business venture, then franchising may be an option for you. Remember that hard work, dedication

and sacrifice are key elements in the success of any business venture, including a franchise.

For more information visit www.sba.gov/franchise.

HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

Going to work used to mean traveling from home to a plant, store or office. Today, many people do some or all their work at home.

Getting Started

Before diving headfirst into a home-based business, you must know why you are doing it. To succeed, your business must be based on something greater than a desire to be your own boss. You must plan and make improvements and adjustments along the road.

Working under the same roof where your family lives may not prove to be as easy as it seems. One suggestion is to set up a separate office in your home to create a professional environment.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Can I switch from home responsibilities to business work easily?
- Do I have the self-discipline to maintain schedules while at home?
- Can I deal with the isolation of working from home?
- Am I a self-starter?

Need more help writing a business plan?

Visit

www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplan for more information on writing a business plan.

You can also find help from SCORE by visiting www.score.org and clicking on “Business Tools.”

Veterans can get help writing a business plan by visiting their local Veteran’s Business Development Center. Find yours at www.sba.gov/vets.

Women can get help at their local Women’s Business Center. Find yours at www.sba.gov/women.

Legal Requirements

A home-based business is subject to many of the same laws and regulations affecting other businesses.

Some general areas include:

- **Zoning regulations.** If your business operates in violation of them, you could be fined or shut down.
- **Product restrictions.** Certain products cannot be produced in the home. Most states outlaw home production of fireworks, drugs, poisons, explosives, sanitary or medical products and toys. Some states also prohibit home-based businesses from making food, drink or clothing.

Be sure to consult an attorney and your local and state departments of state, labor and health to find out which laws and regulations will affect your business. Additionally, check on registration and accounting requirements needed to open your home-based business. You may need a work certificate or license from the state. Your business name may need to be registered with the state. A separate business telephone and bank account are good business practices.

Also remember, if you have employees you are responsible for withholding income and social-security taxes, and for complying with minimum wage and employee health and safety laws.

If you're convinced that opening a home-based business is for you, it's time to create your business plan. The SBA and its resource partners, such as SCORE, SBDCs, VBOCs and WBCs can help make the process easier.

WRITING A BUSINESS PLAN

After you've thought about what type of business you want, the next step is to develop a business plan. Think of the business plan as a roadmap with milestones for the business. It begins as a pre-assessment tool to determine profitability and market share, then expands as an in-business assessment tool to determine success, obtain financing and determine repayment ability, among other factors.

Creating a comprehensive business plan can be a long process, and you need good advice. The SBA and its resource partners, including Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers, and SCORE, have the expertise to help you craft a winning business plan. SBA also offers online templates to get you started.

In general, a good business plan contains:

Introduction

- Give a detailed description of the business and its goals.
- Discuss ownership of the business and its legal structure.
- List the skills and experience you bring to the business.
- Discuss the advantages you and your business have over competitors.

Marketing

- Discuss the products and services your company will offer.
- Identify customer demand for your products and services.
- Identify your market, its size and locations.
- Explain how your products and services will be advertised and marketed.
- Explain your pricing strategy.

Financial Management

- Develop an expected return on investment and monthly cash flow for the first year.
- Provide projected income statements, and balance sheets for a two-year period.
- Discuss your break-even point.
- Explain your personal balance sheet and method of compensation.
- Discuss who will maintain your accounting records and how they will be kept.
- Provide "what if" statements addressing alternative approaches to potential problems.

Operations

- Explain how the business will be managed day-to-day.
- Discuss hiring and personnel procedures.
- Discuss insurance, lease or rent agreements, and issues pertinent to your business.
- Account for the equipment necessary to produce your goods or services.
- Account for production and delivery of products and services.

Concluding Statement

Summarize your business goals and objectives and express your commitment to the success of your business. Once you have completed your business plan, review it with a friend or business associate and professional business counselor like SCORE, WBC or SBDC representatives, SBA district office business development specialists or veterans business development specialists.

Remember, the business plan is a flexible document that should change as your business grows.

REACHING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES Women Business Owners

Women entrepreneurs are changing the face of America's economy. In the 1970s, women owned less than five percent of the nation's businesses. Today, they are majority owners of about a third of the nation's small businesses and are at least equal owners of about half of all small businesses. SBA serves women entrepreneurs nationwide through its various programs and services, some of which are designed especially for women.

The SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership serves as an advocate for women-owned business. OWBO oversees a nationwide network of 110 women's business centers that provide business training, counseling and mentoring geared specifically to women, especially those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. The program is a public-private partnership with locally-based nonprofits and each tailors its services to meet the needs of its community. Women's Business Centers serve a wide diversity of geographic areas, population



SBA'S WEBSITE

Go to SBA's new website today, featuring:

- Faster, better search capabilities
- Information tailored to your needs
- News about SBA programs & services

Some pages may change URLs on the upgraded site. Please consult www.sba.gov or your local SBA district office for assistance.

densities, and economic environments, including urban, suburban, and rural. Local economies vary from depressed to thriving, and range from metropolitan areas to entire states. Each Women's Business Center tailors its services to the needs of its individual community, but all offer a variety of innovative programs, often including courses in different languages. They provide training in finance, management, marketing, and the Internet, as well as access to all of the SBA's financial and procurement assistance programs.

Central Alabama

Women's Business Center

(A project of the Schlarb Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs)
2 N. 20th St., Ste. 830
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-453-0249 • 205-453-0253 Fax
866-252-5787 Toll Free
Carol Adams, Director
Carol@cawbcc.org
www.cawbcc.org
Serves Blount, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega, Tuscaloosa and Walker Counties.

Women's Business Center of Southern Alabama

1301 Azalea Rd., Ste. 201A
Mobile, AL 36693
251-660-2725 or 800-378-7461
251-660-8854 Fax
Sherman Blosser, Executive Director
www.womenbiz.biz
Serves Mobile and Baldwin Counties.

Bizmobile

1301 Azalea Rd., Ste. 201A
Mobile, AL 36693
251-660-2725
Sylvia Browder, Director
www.womenbiz.biz
Serves: Washington, Clarke, Escambia, Conecuh and Monroe Counties.

Women's Business Center of North Alabama

225 Church St.
Huntsville, AL 35801
Joanne Randolph, Executive Director
256-535-2038 • 256-535-2015 Fax
info@wbena.org
www.wbena.org
Serves North Alabama Counties.

Other Women's Programs

U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce

www.sblink.us/html/uswcc.aspx
**National Association of Women Business
Owners (NAWBO) – Birmingham**

P.O. Box 55414
Birmingham, AL 35255-5414
Voice Message Center:
205-970-6316 ext. 324
ruwena_healy@yahoo.com
www.nawbobirmingham.org

Women's Business Council

c/o Huntsville/Madison County
Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 804
Huntsville, AL 35804
256-535-2013
jjeffers@hsvchamber.org

Women's Economic Development Council

www.wedc-online.com
info@wedc-online.com

Women's Economic Development Foundation

www.wedcfoundation.org



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Angie Sweatman

(334) 318-8064 • Email: angie@asbc504.com

www.fbdc.net

1784 Taliaferro Trail, Suite B, Montgomery, AL 36117



CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CFBCP)

Faith-based and neighborhood organizations know their communities; and they have earned the trust of the people in their communities. Because of their credibility, they are uniquely positioned to build awareness of programs that encourage entrepreneurship, economic growth and job creation.

SBA is committed to reaching out to faith based and community organizations that are eligible to participate in the agency's programs by informing their congregants, members and neighbors about SBA's programs. In particular, many faith-based and community non-profit organizations can provide a local financing option for entrepreneurs by becoming SBA Microloan Intermediaries. An SBA Microloan Intermediary often acts as a

bank for entrepreneurs and small businesses that might otherwise be able to find access to capital.

VETERANS AND RESERVISTS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The SBA offers a variety of services to American veterans who have made or are seeking to make the transition from service member to small business owner. Each of SBA's 68 district offices has designated a veteran's business development officer to help guide veterans, Reserve Component members and transitioning service members who want to succeed in entrepreneurship.

Sixteen Veterans Business Outreach Centers located in California, Florida, Guam, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Montana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington provide online and in-person entrepreneurial development services for veterans and reservists such as business training, counseling and mentoring, pre-business plan workshops, feasibility analysis, and referrals to additional small business resources.

To learn more about the Veterans Business Outreach program or find the nearest SBA VBOC, visit the SBA Web site at www.sba.gov/vets.

SBA also partners with the Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Veterans With Disabilities at Syracuse University, University of Connecticut, Florida State University, Texas A&M University, UCLA, Purdue and Louisiana State University to prepare service-disabled veterans for business ownership. SBA has also recently developed two partnerships which target women veteran-entrepreneurs (V-WISE) and family members of Reserve Component members of the military (Operation Endure and Grow).

SBDCs and SCORE and some WBCs also provide targeted management assistance to veterans who are current or prospective small business owners. Many SBDCs have special programs for veterans and SCORE also provides resources and counseling services online at www.score.org.

The SBA offers special assistance for small businesses owned by activated Reserve and National Guard members. Any self-employed Reserve or Guard member with an existing SBA loan can request from their SBA lender or SBA

district office, loan payment deferrals, interest rate reductions and other relief after they receive their activation orders.

Additionally, the SBA offers special low-interest-rate financing to small businesses when an owner or essential employee is called to active duty. The Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program provides loans up to \$2 million to eligible small businesses to cover operating costs that cannot be met due to the loss of an essential employee called to active duty in the Reserves or National Guard.

To ensure that veterans, service-disabled veterans and Reserve and National Guard member entrepreneurs receive special consideration in all its entrepreneurial programs and resources, the SBA has established an Office of Veterans Business Development. OVBD develops and distributes informational materials for entrepreneurship such as the Veterans Business Resource Guide, VETGazette, and Getting Veterans Back to Work.

For more information or special assistance with government contracting, including programs for veterans and service-disabled veterans, please check the Contracting Opportunities section of this publication.

SBA's special financing program targeted to the military community, Patriot Express has new and enhanced programs and services for veterans and members of the active and reserve military community (including spouses) wanting to establish or expand small businesses. See the Financing section for more information on Patriot Express.

NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) ensures American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians seeking to create, develop and expand small businesses have full access to the necessary business development and expansion tools available through the agency's entrepreneurial development, lending, and contracting programs. ONAA provides a network of training and counseling services and engages in numerous outreach activities such as tribal consultations, development and distribution of educational materials, attendance and participation in economic development events and assisting these small businesses with SBA programs.

More information is available at www.sba.gov/naa.

SUCCESS STORY

Creative Concepts

continued from page 7

the Middle East. They are in the process of evaluating markets in Africa and Latin America.

Their research and tenacity have paid off. "Labeling and import requirements for food and agricultural products can vary greatly by country, even within the European Union. Creative Concept's ability to comply with these regulations was crucial to successfully entering these markets," according to Michael Brooks of the Alabama International Trade Center.

Setting up distributors overseas has been another key to their success. The International Trade Center helped by providing financial background checks on potential distributors and training on how to respond to and evaluate foreign distributors.

"Our products have been very well-received in the U.S., but right now our company's growth depends on the expanding youth demographic found in many foreign markets," said Kathy. That's a sweet deal and one that continues to propel this firm's unique position in overseas markets. Creative Concepts has a workforce of 35 individuals.

REGULATIONS KNOWING THE RULES

Paying Attention to Detail Can Save Time and Money



Even if you are running a small home-based business, you will have to comply with many of the local, state, and federal regulations. Avoid the temptation to ignore regulatory details. Doing so may avert some red tape in the short term, but could be an obstacle as your business grows. Taking the time to research the applicable regulations is as important as knowing your market. Bear in mind that regulations vary by industry. If you're in the food-service business, for example, you will have to deal with the health department. If you use chemical solvents, you will have environmental compliances to meet. Carefully investigate the regulations that affect your industry. Being out of compliance could leave you unprotected legally, lead to expensive penalties and jeopardize your business.

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

There are many forms of legal structure you may choose for your business. Each legal structure offers organizational options with different tax and liability issues. We suggest you research each legal structure thoroughly and consult a tax accountant and/or attorney prior to making your decision.

CHOOSING YOUR BUSINESS STRUCTURE

You may operate your business under one of many organizational structures. The most common organizational

structures are sole proprietorships, general and limited partnerships, "C" and "S" corporations and limited liability companies.

Each structure offers unique tax and liability benefits. If you're uncertain which business format is right for you, you may want to discuss options with a business counselor or attorney.

Sole Proprietorship

One person operating a business as an individual is a sole proprietorship. It's the most common form of business organization. Profits are taxed as income to the owner personally. The personal tax rate is usually lower than the corporate tax rate. The owner has complete control of the business, but faces unlimited liability for its debts. There is very little government regulation or reporting required with this business structure.

General Partnership

A partnership exists when two or more persons join together in the operation and management of a business. Partnerships are subject to relatively little regulation and are fairly easy to establish. A formal partnership agreement is recommended to address potential conflicts such as: who will be responsible for performing each task; what, if any, consultation is needed between partners before major decisions, and what happens when a partner dies. Under a general partnership each partner is liable for all debts of the

business. Profits are taxed as income to the partners based on their ownership percentage.

Limited Partnership

Like a general partnership, a limited partnership is established by an agreement between two or more persons. However, there are two types of partners.

- A general partner has greater control in some aspects of the partnership. For example, only a general partner can decide to dissolve the partnership. General partners have no limits on the dividends they can receive from profit so they incur unlimited liability.
- Limited partners can only receive a share of profits based on the proportional amount on their investment, and liability is similarly limited in proportion to their investment.

"C" Corporation

A "C" corporation is a legal entity created under state law by the filing of articles of incorporation. A corporation is a separate entity having its own rights, privileges and liabilities, apart from those of the individual(s) forming the corporation. It's the most complex form of business organization and is comprised of shareholders, directors and officers. Since the corporation is a separate legal entity in its own right it can own assets, borrow money and perform business functions without directly involving the owners. Corporations are subject to more government regulation and offer the owners the advantage of limited liability, but not total protection from lawsuits.

Subchapter "S" Corporation

Subchapter "S" references a special part of the Internal Revenue Code that permits a corporation to be taxed as a partnership or sole proprietorship, with profits taxed at the individual, rather than the corporate rate. A business must meet certain requirements for Subchapter "S" status. Contact the IRS for more information.

LLCs and LLPs

The limited liability company is a relatively new business form. It combines selected corporate and partnership characteristics while still maintaining status as a legal entity distinct from its owners. As a separate entity it can acquire assets, incur liabilities and conduct business. It limits liability for the owners. The limited liability partnership is similar to the LLC, but it is for professional organizations.

LOGISTICS OF STARTING YOUR BUSINESS

BUSINESS LICENSES

There are many types of licenses, both state and local as well as professional. Depending on what you do and where you plan to operate, your business may be required to have various state and/or municipal licenses, certificates or permits.

Licenses are typically administered by a variety of state and local departments. Consult your state or local government for assistance. For additional information, contact:

Day Care Licenses

Alabama Department of Human Resources
1321 - 5th Ave. S.
Birmingham, AL 35202
205-918-5100
www.dhr.state.al.us

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME

Registering your business name, after doing a search to make sure that it is not already in use, protects you from others who might want to use the same name. For more information, contact the county clerk's office in the county where your business is based. If you are a corporation, you'll need to check with the state.

Alabama Secretary of State

Corporation Division
P.O. Box 5616
Montgomery, AL 36103-5616
334-242-5324
www.sos.state.al.us

BUSINESS INSURANCE

Like home insurance, business insurance protects your business against fire, theft and other losses. Contact your insurance agent or broker. It is prudent for any business to purchase a number of basic types of insurance. Some types of coverage are required by law, other simply make good business sense. The types of insurance listed below are

among the most commonly used and are merely a starting point for evaluating the needs of your business.

Liability Insurance – Businesses may incur various forms of liability in conducting their normal activities. One of the most common types is product liability, which may be incurred when a customer suffers harm from using the business product. There are many other types of liability, which are frequently related to specific industries. Liability law is constantly changing. An analysis of your liability insurance needs by a competent professional is vital in determining an adequate and appropriate level of protection for your business.

Property – There are many different types of property insurance and levels of coverage available. It is important to determine the property you need to insure for the continuation of your business and the level of insurance you need to replace or rebuild. You must also understand the terms of the insurance, including any limitations or waivers of coverage.

Business Interruption – While property insurance may pay enough to replace damaged or destroyed equipment or buildings, how will you pay costs such as taxes, utilities and other continuing expenses during the period between when the damage occurs and when the property is replaced? Business Interruption (or "business income") insurance can provide sufficient funds to pay your fixed expenses during a period of time when your business is not operational.

"Key Man" – If you (and/or any other individual) are so critical to the operation of your business that it cannot continue in the event of your illness or death, you should consider "key man" insurance. This type of policy is frequently required by banks or government loan programs. It also can be used to provide continuity in operations during a period of ownership transition caused by the death, incapacitation or absence due to a Title 10 military activation of an owner or other "key" employee.

Automobile – It is obvious that a vehicle owned by your business should be insured for both liability and replacement purposes. What is less obvious is that you may need special insurance (called "non-owned automobile coverage") if you use your personal vehicle on company business. This policy covers the business' liability for any damage which may result for such usage.

Officer and Director – Under most state laws, officers and directors of a corporation may become personally liable for their actions on behalf of the company. This type of policy covers this liability.

Home Office – If you are establishing an office in your home, it is a good idea to contact your homeowners' insurance company to update your policy to include coverage for office equipment. This coverage is not automatically included in a standard homeowner's policy.

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

An EIN, also known as a federal tax identification number, is used to identify a business entity. Generally all businesses need an EIN. You may apply for an EIN in a variety of ways, including online, phone, and fax. Taxpayers can obtain an EIN immediately by calling 800-829-4933, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. customer's local time.

More information can be found at www.irs.gov.

FEDERAL SELF-EMPLOYMENT TAX

Every employee must pay Social Security and Medicare coverage. If you are self-employed, your contributions are made through the self-employment tax.

The IRS has publications, counselors and workshops available to help you sort it out. For more information, contact the IRS at 800-829-1040 or www.irs.gov.

BUSINESS TAX INFORMATION

If you plan to hire employees you are also required to obtain a Federal Employee Identification Number from the IRS. To obtain the registration form and reference documents, contact the IRS at 800-829-1040 or visit their website: <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/index.html> for complete information. For more information, contact:

Alabama Department of Revenue

P.O. Box 327480
Montgomery, AL 36132-7710
www.ador.state.al.us

State Withholding

334-242-1300 • 334-242-0112 Fax

Business Privilege Tax Division

334-353-7923

Corporate Tax Division

334-242-1200

SALES TAX EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE

If you plan to sell products, you will need a Sales Tax Exemption Certificate. It allows you to purchase inventory, or materials, which will become part of the product you sell, from suppliers without paying taxes. It requires you to charge sales tax to your customers, which you are responsible for remitting to the state. You will have to pay penalties if it is found that you should have been taxing your products and now owe back taxes to the state. For information on sales tax issues, contact your state's government.

Sales & Use Tax Division

P.O. Box 327710
Montgomery, AL 36132-7710
334-242-1490
www.ador.state.al.us

FEDERAL INCOME TAX

Like the state income tax, the method of paying federal income taxes depends upon your legal form of business.

Sole Proprietorship: You must file IRS Federal Form Schedule C along with your personal Federal Income Tax return (Form 1040) and any other applicable forms pertaining to gains or losses in your business activity.

Partnership: You must file a Federal Partnership return (Form 1065). This is merely informational to show gross and net earnings of profit and loss. Also, each partner must report his share of partnership earnings on his individual Form 1040 based on the information from the K-1 filed with the Form 1065.

Corporation: You must file a Federal Corporation Income Tax return (Form 1120). You will also be required to report your earnings from the corporation including salary and other income such as dividends on your personal federal income tax return (Form 1040).

FEDERAL PAYROLL TAX

Federal Withholding Tax: Any business employing a person must register with the IRS and acquire an EIN and pay federal withholding tax at least quarterly. File Form SS-4 with IRS to obtain number and required tax forms. Call 800-829-3676 or 800-829-1040 if you have questions.

IRS WEB PRODUCTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

For the most timely and up-to-date tax information, go to www.irs.gov/businesses/small/index.html.

Updated Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop

The IRS's *Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop* (www.tax.gov/SmallBusinessTaxpayer) is an interactive resource to help small business owners learn about their federal tax rights and responsibilities. This dynamic educational product consists of several stand-alone lessons that can be selected and viewed in any sequence.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS

All employees must have a social security card. It must be signed by its owner, and you should always ask to see and personally record the social security number. Failure to do so may cause your employee to lose benefits and considerable trouble for yourself in back tracking to uncover the error.

Each payday, your employees must receive a statement from you telling them what deductions were made and how many dollars were taken out for each legal purpose. This can be presented in a variety of ways, including on the check as a detachable portion or in the form of an envelope with the items printed and spaces for dollar deductions to be filled in.

EMPLOYEE CONSIDERATIONS

Taxes

If you have any employees, including officers of a corporation but not the sole proprietor or partners, you must make periodic payments of, and/or file quarterly reports about payroll taxes and other mandatory deductions. You may contact these government agencies for information, assistance and forms.

Social Security Administration

800-772-1213
www.ssa.gov

Social Security's Business Services Online

The Social Security Administration now provides free electronic services online at www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/. Once registered for Business Services Online, business owners or their authorized representative can:

- file W-2s online; and

- verify Social Security Numbers through the Social Security Number Verification Service, used for all employees prior to preparing and submitting Forms W-2.

Federal Withholding

U.S. Internal Revenue Service
800-829-1040
www.irs.gov

Health Insurance

Compare plans in your area at www.healthcare.gov.

Employee Insurance

If you hire employees you may be required to provide unemployment or workers' compensation insurance. For more information, contact one of the following:

Employee Insurance

Commissioner of Insurance
State of Alabama
P.O. Box 303351
Montgomery, AL 36130
334-269-3550
www.aldoi.gov

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

334-242-8025 • 334-242-8258 Fax
<http://www.dir.state.al.us/uc>

Worker's Compensation Division

649 Monroe St.
Montgomery, AL 36130
334-353-0990 or 800-528-5166
334-353-8262 Fax
www.dir.alabama.gov/wc

WORKPLACE DISABILITY PROGRAMS

Americans with Disabilities (ADA):
For assistance with the ADA, call 800-669-3362 or visit www.ada.gov.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires employers to verify employment eligibility of new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Business Liaison offers a selection of information bulletins and live assistance through the Employer Hotline. For forms call 800-870-3676, for the Employer Hotline call 800-357-2099.

E-Verify: Employment Eligibility Verification

E-Verify, operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration, is the best--and quickest--way for

employers to determine the employment eligibility of new hires. It is a safe, simple, and secure Internet-based system that electronically verifies Social Security number and employment eligibility information reported on Form I-9. E-Verify is voluntary in most states and there is no charge to use it.

If you are an employer or employee and would like more information about the E-Verify program, please visit www.dhs.gov/E-Verify or contact our Customer Support staff: 1-888-464-4218 Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm. E-mail: e-verify@dhs.gov

SAFETY & HEALTH REGULATIONS

All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration outlines specific health and safety standards adopted by the U.S. Department of Labor. For more information, contact:

Federal Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Department of Labor
820 First St. N.E.
Washington, DC 20020
866-487-2365 National Contact Center
www.dol.gov

Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA)

Birmingham Area Office
950 22nd St. N., Ste. 1250
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-731-1534 • 205-731-0504 Fax
www.osha.gov

Mobile Area Office

1141 Montlimar Dr., Ste. 1006
Mobile, AL 36609
251-441-6131 • 251-441-6396 Fax

U.S. Department of Labor

P.O. Box 303500
Montgomery, AL 36130-3500
334-242-3460 • 334-240-3417 Fax
www.ala.labor.state.al.us

U.S. Department of Labor

Wage and Hour Division
2015 N. 2nd Ave.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-731-1305 • 205-731-3482 Fax
www.dol.gov

AL State Dept. of Industrial Relations

Tax Department
3460 3rd Ave. S.
Birmingham, AL 35202
205-254-1251 • 205-254-1264 Fax

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

Ridgepark Place
1130 22nd St. S., Ste. 2000
Birmingham, AL 35205
205-212-2100 • 205-212-2101 Fax
www.eeoc.gov/birmingham

Alabama Department of Environmental Management Hazardous Substance Compliance

Use of hazardous substances in businesses is highly regulated and there are heavy fines for non-compliance. If you need information about air, water, land uses, solid waste and hazardous materials call or write:

Ground Water/Office of Underwater Storage Tanks

1400 Coliseum Blvd.
Montgomery, AL 36110-2059
334-271-7700 • 334-270-5631 Fax
www.adem.state.al.us

Department of Environmental Management

110 Vulcan Rd.
Homewood, AL 35209
205-942-6168 • 205-941-1603 Fax
www.adem.state.al.us

BUILDING CODES, PERMITS AND ZONING

It is important to consider zoning regulations when choosing a site for your business. You may not be permitted to conduct business out of your home or engage in industrial activity in a retail district. Contact the business license office in the city or town where the business is located.

BAR CODING

Many stores require bar coding on packaged products. Many industrial and manufacturing companies use bar coding to identify items they receive and ship. There are several companies that can assist businesses with bar-coding needs. You may want to talk with an SBDC, SCORE or WBC counselor for more information.

Federal Registration of Trademarks and Copyrights

Trademarks or service marks are words, phrases, symbols, designs or combinations thereof that identify and distinguish the source of goods. Trademarks may be registered at both the state and federal level. To register a federal trademark, contact:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office:

P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
800-786-9199
www.uspto.gov/

Trademark Information Hotline 703-308-9000

STATE REGISTRATION OF A TRADEMARK

Trademarks and service marks may be registered in a state.

Caution: Federally registered trademarks may conflict with and supersede state registered business and product names.

Patents

A patent is the grant of a property right to the inventor by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It provides the owner with the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale or selling the patented item in the United States.

Additional information is provided in the publications, General Information Concerning Patents and other publications distributed through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. For more information, contact the:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
800-786-9199 • www.uspto.gov

Other Resources

Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org

Business Council of Alabama
P.O. Box 76
Montgomery, AL 36101-0076
334-834-6000

Government Printing Office
www.gpoaccess.gov

State Information Operator
334-242-8000

Copyrights

Copyrights protect original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical and artistic, and certain other intellectual works. Copyright does not protect facts, ideas and systems, although it may protect the way these things are expressed. For general information contact:

U.S. Copyright Office

U.S. Library of Congress
James Madison Memorial Building
Washington, DC 20559
202-707-9100 - Order Line
202-707-3000 - Information Line
www.copyright.gov

FINANCING & SURETY BONDS GETTING APPROVED

Financing Options to Start or Grow Your Business



Many entrepreneurs need financial resources to start or expand a small business themselves and must combine what they have with other sources of financing. These sources can include family and friends, venture-capital financing, and business loans.

This section of the Small Business Resource guide discusses SBA's primary business loan and equity financing programs. These are: the 7(a) Loan Program, the Certified Development Company or 504 Loan Program, the Microloan Program and the Small Business Investment Company Program. The distinguishing features for these programs are the total dollar amounts that can be borrowed, the type of lenders who can provide these loans, the uses for the loan proceeds, and the terms placed on the borrower.

Note: *The SBA does not offer grants to individual business owners to start or grow a business.*

SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT COMPANY PROGRAM

There are a variety of alternatives to bank financing for small businesses. The Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program fills the gap between the availability of private capital and the needs of small businesses for growth

capital. Licensed and regulated by the SBA, SBICs are privately owned and managed investment funds that make capital available to qualifying U.S. small businesses at attractive rates. The funds raise private capital and can receive SBA-guaranteed leverage up to 3x private capital paid-in, with a leverage ceiling of \$150 million per SBIC and \$225 million for two or more licenses under common control. Licensed SBICs are for-profit investment firms whose incentive is to share in the success of a small business. The SBIC program provides funding for a broad range of industries. Some SBICs invest in a particular field or industry while others invest more generally. For more information visit www.sba.gov/inv.

FJC Growth Capital Corporation

Frank L. Collazo, General Manager
P.O. Box 1290
Huntsville, AL 35807
256-430-3132 • 256-430-3280 Fax
flc@fjcgrowth.com
Investment Criteria
Investment Size Range
Preferred Min: \$350,000
Preferred Max: \$500,000
Type of Capital Provided: Loans w/Equity Features
Funding Stage Preference: Expansion
Later Stage
Industry Preference: Manufacturing,
Health/Medical, Communications, Diversified
Geographic Preferences: South, Southeast,
Midwest.

Harbinger Mezzanine Partners, L.P.

John Harrison, Contact
One Riverchase Pkwy. S.
Birmingham, AL 35244
615-301-6400 • 615-301-6401 Fax
slrogers@harbert.net
Investment Criteria
Investment Size Range
Preferred Min.: \$0
Preferred Max.: \$0

TD Javelin Capital Fund II, L.P.

Lyle Hohnke, Manager
2850 Cahaba Rd., Ste. 240
Birmingham, AL 35223
203-629-8700 • 203-629-9293 Fax
mmcleish@tullisdickerson.com

Alabama Plan for Linked Deposits

The Alabama Plan for Linked Deposits is a program operated as a division of the Alabama State Treasurer's Office. It allows the State Treasurer to make deposits in state banks on which banks pay 2 percent below the normal interest rate paid to the state for its funds. The reduction in the interest rate paid by the bank must be passed on to the borrowers on loans qualifying for this program. It amounts to a 2 percent subsidy on the borrower's interest rates for two years to help stimulate economic growth in the state.

Use of funds - Land, buildings or equipment; repairs and renovations; rent, utilities, insurance or taxes; legal or accounting fees; wages or inventory.

Eligibility - Any person, corporation or partnership engaged in business and headquartered in Alabama, organized for profit, maintaining facilities primarily in Alabama, having no more than 150 employees, having debts equal to or greater than 35 percent of assets, and creating or sustaining job opportunities.

Job creation - One job must be created or sustained for each \$15,000 of loan. Loan requests above \$250,000 must demonstrate that one job can be created for each \$10,000 of loan.

SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program encourages small businesses to advance their technical potential from funds

committed by federal agencies with large extramural research and development budgets. The SBIR program serves to fund the critical startup and development stages for a technology and encourages commercialization of the technology, product or service. In turn, this stimulates the U.S. economy.

SBIR Requirements:

Small businesses must meet the following eligibility criteria to participate in the SBIR program.

- Be 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens in the U.S. or be a for-profit business concern that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by another for-profit business concern that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are citizens of, or permanent resident aliens in, the U.S.
- Be for-profit.
- Principal researcher must be employed by small business.
- Company size cannot exceed 500 employees.

For more information on the SBIR Program visit www.sba.gov/sbir.

Participating Agencies:

Each year, the following eleven federal departments and agencies are required to reserve 2.5% of their extramural R&D funds for award to small businesses through the SBIR program:

Departments of Agriculture; Commerce; Defense; Education; Energy; Health and Human Services; Homeland Security; Transportation; Environmental Protection Agency; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and National Science Foundation.

SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM

The Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program reserves a specific percentage of federal R&D funding for award to small business and non-profit research institution partners. Central to the program is expansion of the public/private sector partnership to include the joint venture opportunities for small business and the nation's premier nonprofit research institutions. Small business has long been where innovation and innovators thrive, but the risk and expense of conducting serious R&D efforts can be beyond the means of many small businesses. Non-

profit research laboratories are also instrumental in developing high-tech innovations but frequently, innovation is confined to the theoretical. STTR combines the strengths of both entities by introducing entrepreneurial skills to high-tech research efforts. The technologies and products are transferred from the laboratory to the marketplace. The small business profits from the commercialization, which, in turn, stimulates the U.S. economy.

STTR Requirements:

Small businesses must meet the following eligibility criteria to participate in the STTR program.

- Be 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens in the U.S.
- Be organized for profit.
- Principal researcher need not be employed by small business.
- Company size cannot exceed 500 employees. (No size limit for nonprofit research institution).

The nonprofit research institution partner must also meet certain eligibility criteria:

- Be located in the United States and be one of the following:
- Nonprofit college or university.
- Domestic nonprofit research organization.
- Federally funded R&D center.

Participating Agencies:

Each year the following five Federal departments and agencies are required by STTR to reserve 0.3% of their extramural R&D funds for award to small business/nonprofit research institution partnerships: Department of Defense; Department of Energy; Department of Health and Human Services; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and National Science Foundation.

SBA BUSINESS LOANS

When you seek a business loan, familiarize yourself with the SBA's business loan programs to see if they may be a viable option. Keep in mind the dollar amount you seek to borrow and how you want to use the loan proceeds. The three principal players in most of these programs are — the applicant small business, the lender and the SBA. SBA guarantees a portion of the loan (except for Microloans). The business should have its business plan prepared before it applies for a loan. This plan should explain what resources

will be needed to accomplish the desired business purpose including the cost of everything, the applicants' contribution, use of loan proceeds, collateral, and most important, an explanation of how the business will be able to repay the loan in a timely manner.

The lender will analyze the application to see if it meets the lender's criteria as well as SBA's requirements. SBA will look to the lender to do much, if not all, of the analysis before it provides its guaranty on the lender's loan or provides the microlenders with funds to re-lend to the business. The SBA's business loan programs provide a key source of financing for viable small businesses that have real potential, but cannot qualify for loans from the lending institutions on their own.

7(A) LOAN PROGRAM

The 7(a) Loan program is the SBA's primary business loan program. It is the agency's most used non-disaster financial assistance program because of its flexibility in loan structure, variety of loan proceeds uses, and availability. This program has broad eligibility requirements and credit criteria to accommodate a wide range of financing needs.

The business loans that SBA guarantees do not come from the agency, but rather from banks and other approved lenders. The loans are funded by these organizations and they make the decisions to approve or not approve the applicants' requests.

The SBA guaranty reduces the lender's risk of borrower non-payment. If the borrower defaults, the lender can request SBA to pay the lender that percentage of the outstanding balance guaranteed by SBA. This allows the lender to recover a portion from SBA of what it lent if the borrower can't make the payments. The borrower is still obligated for the full amount.

To qualify for an SBA guaranty, a small business must meet the lender's criteria and the 7(a) requirements. In addition the lender must certify that it would not provide this loan under the proposed terms and conditions unless it can obtain an SBA guaranty. If the SBA is going to provide a lender with a guaranty, the applicant must be eligible and creditworthy and the loan structured under conditions acceptable to SBA.

PERCENTAGE OF GUARANTIES AND LOAN MAXIMUMS

The SBA only guarantees a portion of any particular loan so each loan will also have an unguaranteed portion giving the lender a certain amount of exposure and risk on each loan. The percentage SBA guarantees depends on either the dollar amount or the program the lender uses to obtain its guaranty. For loans of \$150,000 or less the SBA may guaranty as much as 85 percent and for loans over \$150,000 the SBA can provide a guaranty of up to 75 percent.

The maximum 7(a) loan amount is \$5 million. (Loans made under the SBAExpress program, which is discussed subsequently, have a 50 percent guaranty.)

INTEREST RATES AND FEES

The actual interest rate for a 7(a) loan guaranteed by SBA is negotiated between the applicant and lender and subject to SBA maximums. Both fixed and variable interest rate structures are available. The maximum rate is comprised of two parts, a base rate and

an allowable spread. There are three acceptable base rates (Wall Street Journal Prime*, London Interbank One Month Prime plus 3 percent, and an SBA Peg Rate). Lenders are allowed to add an additional spread to the base rate to arrive at the final rate. For loans with maturities of less than seven years the maximum spread will be no more than 2.25 percent. For loans with maturities of seven years or more the maximum spread will be 2.75 percent. The spread on loans under \$50,000 and loans processed through Express procedures may be higher.

Loans guaranteed by SBA are assessed a guaranty fee. This fee is based on the loan's maturity and the dollar amount guaranteed, not the total loan amount. The guaranty fee is generally paid by the borrower and can be included in the loan proceeds.

On any loan with a maturity of one year or less, the fee is just 0.25 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. On loans with maturities of more than one year, the normal guaranty fee is 2 percent of the SBA guaranteed portion on loans up to \$150,000; 3 percent on

loans over \$150,000 but not more than \$700,000; and 3.5 percent on loans over \$700,000. There is also an additional fee of 0.25 percent on any guaranteed portion over \$1 million.

****All references to the prime rate refer to the base rate in effect on the first business day of the month the loan application is received by SBA.***

7(A) LOAN MATURITIES

SBA loan programs are generally intended to encourage longer term small business financing, but actual loan maturities are based on the ability to repay, the purpose of the loan proceeds and the useful life of the assets financed. However, maximum loan maturities have been established: 25 years for real estate; up to 10 years for equipment (depending on the useful life of the equipment); and generally up to seven years for working capital. Short-term loans and revolving lines of credit are also available through the SBA to help small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working capital needs.

LOST ON WHERE TO FIND MONEY FOR YOUR NEW OR EXISTING BUSINESS?

Let Alacom Finance Show You The Right Direction

With our Small Business Loan Programs, we can get you the money you need for:

- Purchase Real Estate and Existing Buildings
- Working Capital
- Build and/or Renovate Facilities
- Restructure Existing Debt
- Purchase Machinery and Equipment

For 30 years, Alacom Finance has embraced entrepreneurs and established, growing businesses with energy and enthusiasm.

Call Alacom Finance today. We will point you in the right direction to secure the financing your business needs.



Alacom Finance
"More Money for Small Business"

Diane Roehrig, President
dianeroehrig@alacom.com

117 Southcrest Drive, Suite 100
Birmingham, AL 35209
p 205.942.3360 tf 800.239.5909
www.alacom.com

STRUCTURE

Most 7(a) loans are repaid with monthly payments of principal and interest. For fixed-rate loans the payments stay the same whereas for variable rate loans the lender can re-establish the payment amount when the interest rates change or at other intervals as negotiated with the borrower. Applicants can request that the lender establish the loan with interest-only payments during the start-up and expansion phases (when eligible) to allow the business time to generate income before it starts making full loan payments. Balloon payments or call provisions are not allowed on any 7(a) loan. The lender may not charge a prepayment penalty if the loan is paid off before maturity, but the SBA will charge the borrower a prepayment fee if the loan has a maturity of 15 or more years and is pre-paid during the first three years.

COLLATERAL

The SBA expects every 7(a) loan to be fully secured, but the SBA will not decline a request to guaranty a loan if the only unfavorable factor is insufficient collateral, provided all available collateral is offered. What these two policies mean is that every SBA loan is to be secured by all available assets (both business and personal) until the recovery value equals the loan amount or until all assets have been pledged to the extent that they are reasonably available. Personal guaranties are required from all the principal owners of the business. Liens on personal assets of the principals may be required.

ELIGIBILITY

7(a) loan eligibility is based on four different factors. The first is size, as all loan recipients must be classified as “small” by SBA. The basic size standards are outlined below. A more in-dept listing of standards can be found at www.sba.gov/size.

SBA Size Standards:

- Manufacturing from 500 to no more than 1,500 employees
- Wholesaling — No more than 100 employees
- Services from \$4.5 million to no more than \$35.5 million in average annual receipts
- Retailing from \$7 million to no more than \$29 million in average annual receipts

- General construction from \$7 million to no more than \$33.5 million in average annual receipts
- Agriculture from \$750,000 to no more than \$17.5 million in average annual receipts

Nature of Business

The second eligibility factor is based on the nature of the business and the process by which it generates income or the customers it serves. The SBA has general prohibitions against providing financial assistance to businesses involved in such activities as lending, speculating, passive investment, pyramid sales, loan packaging, presenting live performances of a prurient sexual nature, businesses involved in gambling and any illegal activity.

The SBA will also not support non-profit businesses, private clubs that limit membership on a basis other than capacity, businesses that promote a religion, businesses owned by individuals incarcerated or on probation or parole, municipalities, and situations where the business or its owners previously failed to repay a federal loan or federally assisted financing.

Use of Proceeds

The third eligibility factor is usage of proceeds. 7(a) proceeds can be used to: purchase machinery, equipment, fixtures, supplies, leasehold improvements, as well as land and/or buildings that will be occupied by the business borrower.

Proceeds can also be used to:

- Expand or renovate facilities;
- Finance receivables and augment working capital;
- Finance seasonal lines of credit;
- Construct commercial buildings; and
- Refinance existing debt under certain conditions.

SBA 7(a) loan proceeds cannot be used for the purpose of making investments. SBA proceeds cannot be used to provide funds to any of the owners of the business except for ordinary compensation for actual services provided.

Miscellaneous Factors

The fourth factor involves a variety of requirements such as SBA's credit elsewhere test and utilization of personal assets requirements where the business and its principal owners must use their own resources before getting a loan guaranteed by SBA. It also includes SBA's anti-discrimination rules and

restrictions on lending to agricultural enterprises because there are other agencies of the federal government with programs to fund such businesses.

Generally, SBA loans must meet the following criteria:

- Every loan must be for a sound business purpose;
- There must be sufficient invested equity in the business so it can operate on a sound financial basis;
- There must be a potential for long-term success;
- The owners must be of good character and reputation; and
- All loans must be so sound as to reasonably assure repayment.

For more information, go to

www.sba.gov/apply.

WHAT TO TAKE TO THE LENDER

Documentation requirements may vary; contact your lender for the information you must supply.

Common requirements include the following:

- Purpose of the loan.
- History of the business.
- Financial statements for three years (existing businesses).
- Schedule of term debts (existing businesses).
- Aging of accounts receivable and payable (existing businesses).
- Projected opening-day balance sheet (new businesses).
- Lease details.
- Amount of investment in the business by the owner(s).
- Projections of income, expenses and cash flow as well as an explanation of the assumptions used to develop these projections.
- Personal financial statements on the principal owners.
- Resume(s) of the principal owners and managers.

HOW THE 7(A) PROGRAM WORKS

Applicants submit their loan application to a lender for the initial review. The lender will generally review the credit merits of the request before deciding if they will make the loan themselves or if they will need an SBA guaranty. If a guaranty is needed, the lender will also review eligibility, and the applicant should be prepared to complete some additional documents before the lender reviews the request to ensure it meets SBA's requirements before sending the request for guaranty to the SBA. Applicants who feel they need more help with the process should contact their local SBA district office or one of SBA's resource partners for assistance.

There are several ways a lender can apply to the SBA for a 7(a) guaranty from SBA. The main differences between these methods are related to the documentation which the lender provides, the amount of review which SBA conducts, the amount of the loan and the lender responsibilities in case the loan defaults and the business' assets must be liquidated. The methods are:

- Standard 7(a) Guaranty
- Certified Lender Program
- Preferred Lender Program
- Rural Lender Advantage
- SBA Express
- Patriot Express
- Export Express
- Community Express

For the Standard, Certified and Preferred methods, the applicant fills out SBA Form 4, and the lender completes SBA Form 4-1. When requests for guarantees are processed using Express methods, the applicant uses more of the regular forms of the lender and just has a few federal forms to complete. When SBA receives a request that is processed through Standard or CLP procedures, it either reanalyzes or reviews the lender's eligibility and credit analysis before deciding to approve or reject. For requests processed through PLP, or Express programs, the lender is delegated the authority to make the credit decision without SBA's concurrences which help expedite the processing time.

In guaranteeing the loan, the SBA assures the lender that, in the event the borrower does not repay the loan, the government will reimburse the lending institution for a portion of its loss. By providing this guaranty, the SBA is able to help tens of thousands of small businesses every year get financing they might not otherwise obtain.

After SBA approval, the lender is notified that its loan has been guaranteed. The lender then will work with the applicant to make sure the terms and conditions are met before closing the loan, disbursing the funds, and assuming responsibility for collection and general servicing. The borrower makes monthly loan payments directly to the lender. As with any loan, the borrower is responsible for repaying the full amount of the loan in a timely manner.

What the SBA Looks for:

- Ability to repay the loan on time from the projected operating cash flow.
- Owners and operators who are of good character.

- Feasible business plan.
- Management expertise and commitment necessary for success.
- Sufficient funds, including the SBA guaranteed loan, to operate the business on a sound financial basis (for new businesses, this includes the resources to meet start-up expenses and the initial operating phase).
- Adequate equity invested in the business.
- Sufficient collateral to secure the loan or all available collateral if the loan cannot be fully secured.

SBAEXPRESS

The SBAExpress guaranty is available to lenders as a way to obtain a guaranty on smaller loans up to \$350,000. **(Note: Through September 27, 2011, this has increased to \$1 million.)** The program authorizes selected, experienced lenders to use mostly their own forms, analysis and procedures to process, service and liquidate SBA-guaranteed loans. The SBA guarantees up to 50 percent of an SBAExpress loan. Loans under \$25,000 do not require collateral. The use of loan proceeds is the same as for any basic 7(a) loan. Like

most 7(a) loans, maturities are usually five to seven years for working capital and up to 25 years for real estate or equipment. Revolving lines of credit are allowed for a maximum of seven years.

BancorpSouth

One Mississippi Plaza
Tupelo, MS 38804
Gary Martin
662-680-2000

BankTrust

100 St. Joseph St.
Mobile, AL 36602
James Alexander
251-431-7814 • 251-776-5554 Fax

Branch Banking & Trust

1100 Quintard Ave.
Anniston, AL 36201
256-237-5844

Century Bank

5127 Moffat Rd.
Mobile, AL 36618
251-345-1022

Community Bank

Mobile and Baldwin Counties
6808 Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36608
251-338-6200

Greater Mobile Development Corporation

SBA 504 FINANCING

Using the Small Business 504 Program, the GMDC provides financing to small businesses in Alabama who wish to acquire or construct their own building or expansion of an existing building. The SBA 504 Loan provides long-term, fixed asset financing for small businesses.

Why Choose GMDC:

GMDC has the industry experience and works directly with the small business to develop financing packages.

If these advantages sound good to you:

- Lower down payment (10-15%)
- 20 year, Fixed interest rate financing
- Below Market Rate financing

Then Call GMDC at (251) 650-0826

Teresa Sands

Greater Mobile Development Corporation
1301 Azalea Road • Mobile, AL 36693
E-mail: gmdc@ceeibic.org

Compass Bank

P.O. Box 10566
Birmingham, AL 35296
John Baites, Vice President
205-297-3346 • 205-297-7672 Fax

Covenant Bank

7929 Parkway Dr.
Leeds, AL 35064
Heather Jones, Credit Analyst SBA Specialist
205-702-2265 • 205-702-2257 Fax

Exchange Bank of Alabama

Etowah and surrounding counties only
230 N. 3rd St./P.O. Box 1100
Gadsden, AL 35902
Mike Yother
256-547-2572 ext. 1036
256-543-7245 Fax

First National Bank of Brundidge

137 S. Main St.
Brundidge, AL 36010
Pete Jordan
334-735-2351 • 334-735-2983 Fax

Hancock Bank

2510 14th St.
One Hancock Plz.
Gulfport, MS 39501
Tom Collins
228-435-5310

Redstone Federal Credit Union

220 Wynn Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35805
Jack Wright
800-234-1234 ext. 3407
256-722-3759 Fax

RBC Bank

3815 Mansell Rd.
Alphaetta, GA 30022
Amy Carson - SBA Commercial Lending
678-277-4582 • 678-277-4596 Fax

Regions Bank

250 Riverchase Pkwy.
Birmingham AL 35244
Philip Hassler
205-560-5210 • 205-560-8881 Fax

State Bank & Trust

401 S Commerce St.
Geneva, AL 36340
334-684-2247

SunTrust Bank

201 S. Court St.
Florence, AL 35630
Jeff Daniel
256-767-8600 • 256-767-8476 Fax

United Bank

200 E. Nashville Ave.
Atmore, AL 36504
Nancy Helton
251-446-6053 • 251-446-6076 Fax

Wells Fargo

420 20th St. N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-254-5230

Whitney National Bank

50 N. Royal St.
Mobile, AL 36602
Brenda Norris
251-662-1024

PATRIOT EXPRESS

The Patriot Express pilot loan initiative is for veterans and members of the military community wanting to establish or expand a small business. Eligible military community members include:

- Veterans;
- Service-disabled veterans;
- Active-duty servicemembers eligible for the military's Transition Assistance Program;
- Reservists and National Guard members;
- Current spouses of any of the above, including a servicemember;
- The widowed spouse of a servicemember or veteran who died during service or of a service-connected disability.

The Patriot Express loan is offered by SBA's widest network of lenders nationwide and features the fastest turnaround time for loan approvals.

Loans are available up to \$500,000 and qualify for SBA's maximum guaranty of 85 percent for loans of \$150,000 or less and 75 percent for loans over \$150,000 up to \$500,000. For loans above \$350,000, lenders are required to take all available collateral.

The Patriot Express loan can be used for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-estate purchases.

Patriot Express loans feature SBA's lowest interest rates for business loans, generally 2.25 percent to 4.75 percent over prime depending upon the size and maturity of the loan. Your local SBA district office will have a listing of Patriot Express lenders in your area.

More information is available at

www.sba.gov/patriotexpress.

BancorpSouth

One Mississippi Plaza
Tupelo, MS 38804
Gary Martin
662-680-2000

Branch Banking & Trust

1100 Quintard Ave.
Anniston, AL 36201
256-237-5844

Community Bank

Mobile and Baldwin Counties
6808 Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36608
251-338-6200

Exchange Bank of Alabama

Etowah and surrounding counties only
230 N. 3rd St./P.O. Box 1100
Gadsden, AL 35902
Mike Yother
256-547-2572 ext. 1036
256-543-7245 Fax

Hancock Bank

2510 14th St.
One Hancock Plz.
Gulfport, MS 39501
Tom Collins
228-435-5310

Redstone Federal Credit Union

220 Wynn Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35805
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800-234-1234 ext. 3407
256-722-3759 Fax

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250 Riverchase Pkwy.
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401 S Commerce St.
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334-684-2247

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201 S. Court St.
Florence, AL 35630
Jeff Daniel
256-767-8600 • 256-767-8476 Fax

United Bank

200 E. Nashville Ave.
Atmore, AL 36504
Nancy Helton
251-446-6053 • 251-446-6076 Fax

Wells Fargo

420 20th St. N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-254-5230

Whitney National Bank

50 N. Royal St.
Mobile, AL 36602
Brenda Norris
251-662-1024

SPECIAL PURPOSE 7(a) LOAN PROGRAMS

The 7(a) program is the most flexible of SBA's lending programs. The agency has created several variations to the basic 7(a) program to address the particular financing need of certain small businesses. These special purpose programs are not necessarily for all businesses but may be very useful to some small businesses. They are generally governed by the same rules,

regulations, fees, interest rates, etc. as the regular 7(a) loan guaranty. Lenders can advise you of any variations.

CAPLines

The CAPLines program is designed to help small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working capital needs. There are five loan programs under the CAPLines umbrella. The programs can be used to finance seasonal working capital needs; finance the direct costs of performing certain construction, service and supply contracts; finance the direct cost associated with commercial and residential construction; finance operating capital by obtaining advances against existing inventory and accounts receivable; and consolidate short-term debt. SBA provides up to an 85 percent guarantee. There are five distinct programs under the CAPLine umbrella:

- **The Contract Loan Program** is used to finance material and labor needs for a specific contract or contracts. Proceeds can be disbursed before the work begins. If used for one contract, it is generally not revolving; if used for more than one contract at a time, it can be revolving. The loan maturity is usually based on the length of the contract, but no more than five years. Contract payment must be sent directly to the lender.
- **The Seasonal Line of Credit Program** is used to support buildup of inventory, accounts receivable or labor and materials above normal usage for seasonal inventory. The business must have been in business for a period of 12 months and must have a definite established seasonal pattern. The loan may be used over again after a "clean-up" period of 30 days to finance activity for a new season. These also may have a maturity of up to five years. The business may not have another seasonal line of credit outstanding but may have other lines for non-seasonal working capital needs.
- **The Builders Line Program** provides financing for small contractors or developers to construct or rehabilitate residential or commercial property. Loan maturity is generally three years but can be extended up to five years if necessary to facilitate sale of the property. Proceeds are used solely for direct expenses of acquisition, immediate construction and/or significant rehabilitation of the residential or commercial structures. The purchase of the land can be included if it does not exceed 20 percent of the loan proceeds. Up to 5 percent of the proceeds can be used for physical improvements that benefit the property.

- **The Small Asset-Based Line** is a revolving line of credit (up to \$200,000) that provides short term working capital. These lines are generally used by businesses that provide credit to their customers. Disbursements are based on the size of a borrower's accounts receivable and/or inventory. Repayment comes from the collection of accounts receivable or sale of inventory. It does require periodic servicing and monitoring of the collateral for which the lender can charge up to two percent annually to the borrower.
- **The Standard Asset-Based Line** is similar to the Small Asset-Based Line, but for loan amounts over \$200,000. It does require stricter servicing and monitoring and the lender may pass these costs along to the borrower.

EXPORT ASSISTANCE Trade Financing

The SBA has help for existing small businesses wanting to export goods and services.

U.S. EXPORT ASSISTANCE CENTER (USEAC)

U.S. Export Assistance Centers are a network of facilities around the U.S. staffed by SBA, U.S. Department of Commerce and the Export-Import Bank of the U.S. to provide trade promotion and export-finance assistance for small businesses in a single location. The USEACs also work closely with other federal, state and local international trade organizations. To find the nearest USEAC, go to www.export.gov/eac.

Ray Gibeau

U.S. Export Assistance Center
75 Fifth St. N.W., Ste. 1055
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-897-6089

EXPORT WORKING CAPITAL PROGRAM

The SBA's Export Working Capital program (EWCP) assists lenders in meeting the needs of exporters seeking short-term export working capital. This program enables U.S. exporters to obtain loans to fund their direct export costs. The EWCP supports single transactions

Want to fast-forward your SBA business loan application?

Call 1-800-965-LOAN.

As an SBA Express Lender, Hancock Bank can streamline SBA business loans, with answers on your application in days—not weeks. When you're ready to expand or begin a new business venture, Hancock Bank is here to help. We'll make the process easy, with personal service and quick answers. Contact your nearest Hancock Bank branch or call 1-800-965-LOAN.



 Equal Housing Lender. Member FDIC. All loans subject to credit approval. hancockbank.com



or revolving lines of credit. The maximum dollar amount of an export line of credit under this program is \$5 million. SBA guarantees up to 90% of a loan amount or \$ 4.5 million, whichever is less. Loan maturities are generally for a term of 12 months. The guaranty can be reissued for an additional 12 months through a new application process. The guaranty fee the SBA charges is 0.25 percent of the guaranteed amount of the loan for the initial 12 months. The borrower negotiates the interest rate and all other fees with the lender. The program offers flexible terms, low fees and a quick processing time. For information, see www.sba.gov/exportloans.

Eligibility of Exporter

You must have a business operating history of at least one year – not necessarily in exporting. The SBA may waive this requirement if you have sufficient export trade experience or other managerial experience.

Eligibility of Foreign Buyers

The foreign buyer must be a creditworthy entity and the methods of payment must be acceptable to the SBA and the export lender.

Use of EWCP Proceeds:

- To acquire inventory for export or to be used to manufacture goods for export.
- To pay the manufacturing costs of goods for export.
- To purchase goods or services for export.
- To support standby letters of credit related to export transactions.

- For pre-shipment working capital directly related to export orders.
- For post-shipment foreign accounts receivable financing.

Ineligible Use of Proceeds

- To support the applicant's domestic sales.
- To acquire fixed assets or capital goods for the applicant's business.
- To support a sale where the exporter is not taking title to the goods.
- To acquire, equip, or rent commercial space overseas.
- To serve as a warranty letter of credit.

Collateral Requirements

- Collateral for the manufacturing sector typically consists of a first lien on all export-related inventory and export related accounts receivable.
- Collateral for the service sector typically consists of assignment of proceeds of export-related contracts or purchase orders and a first lien on export-related accounts receivable.
- Other collateral may be required.

How to Apply

A small business exporter seeking a guaranteed EWCP loan must apply to a lender.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE LOAN PROGRAM

The SBA's International Trade Loan program (ITL) helps small businesses engaged or preparing to engage in international trade as well as small businesses adversely affected by

competition from imports. This program allows for a maximum loan amount of \$5 million. The international trade loan provides an SBA guarantee up to \$ 4.5 million for a term loan used for the acquisition, construction, renovation, modernization, improvement or expansion of long-term fixed assets or the refinancing of an existing loan used for these same purposes. It may also be used in for working capital or in conjunction with any SBA working capital loans, including the EWCP. The SBA guaranty fee and interest rates are the same as for any standard 7(a) loans.

Eligibility of Exporter

- Applicants must meet the same eligibility requirements for a 7(a) loan.
- Applicant must establish the loan will significantly expand or develop an export market, or the applicant has been adversely affected by import competition, and, in addition, the applicant must show that upgrading equipment or facilities will improve its competitive position.
- If eligibility is based on entering or expanding export sales, the applicant must submit a one or two page international business plan, including sufficient information to reasonably support the likelihood of expanded export sales.

Use of Proceeds

- For facilities or equipment, including purchasing land and building(s); building new facilities; renovating, improving, or expanding existing facilities; purchasing or reconditioning machinery, equipment and fixtures; and making other improvements that will be used within the United States for producing goods or services. Refinancing a facility/building is also permissible if the original loan on the property could have been refinanced under regular 7(a).

Collateral Requirements - Collateral requirements are the same as for regular 7(a) loans.

How to Apply - A small business exporter seeking a guaranteed loan must apply to an SBA participating lender. Call your local SBA District Office for a list of participating lenders.

EXPORT EXPRESS

The Export Express program is designed to help SBA meet the export financing needs of small businesses. It is subject to the same loan processing, making, closing, servicing, and liquidation requirements as well as the same maturity terms, interest rates, and applicable fees as for other SBA loans

except as noted below. The total Export Express loan cannot exceed \$500,000. SBA guarantees 90 percent for loans of \$350,000 and under and 75 percent for loans greater than \$350,000 up to the maximum of \$500,000. SBA allows participating lenders to make their own credit decisions. SBA provides a quick processing time, less than 36 hours.

Eligible Buyers – The same as for the Export Working Capital Program.

Use of Proceeds

- Finance standby letters of credit used for either bid or performance bonds;
- Finance export development activities such as export marketing and promotional activities, participation in foreign trade shows, translation of product literature for foreign markets, and other activities designed to initiate or expand the applicant's export of its products/services from the U.S.;
- Provide transaction-specific financing for overseas orders;
- Provide revolving lines of credit for export purposes, the term of which must not exceed seven years. In some instances, as a normal course of business, the borrower may use portions of revolving lines of credit for domestic purposes, but no less than 70 percent of the revolver to be used for export related purposes;
- Provide term loans and other financing to enable small business concerns, including small business export trading companies to develop foreign markets; and
- Acquire, construct, renovate, modernize, improve or expand production facilities or equipment to be used in the U.S. in the production of goods or services to be exported from the U.S.

Ineligible Use of Proceeds

Proceeds may not be used to finance overseas operations, other than those strictly associated with the marketing and/or distribution of products/services exported from the U.S.

How to Apply

The application process is the same for the SBAExpress, except the applicant must demonstrate that loan proceeds will enable it to enter a new export market or expand an existing export market. The applicant must submit to the lender a plan that includes projected export sales for the upcoming year as well as the dollar volume of export sales for the previous year.

SBA'S NON-7(a) LOAN PROGRAMS

In addition to the 7(a) Loan program SBA has three other non-disaster assistance programs which can help small businesses gain access to capital and bonding.

CERTIFIED DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LOAN PROGRAM (504 LOANS)

The 504 Loan program is an economic development program that supports American small business growth and

helps communities through business expansion and job creation. This SBA program provides long-term, fixed-rate, subordinate mortgage financing for acquisition and/or renovation of capital assets including land, buildings and equipment. Most for-profit small businesses are eligible for this program. The types of businesses excluded from 7(a) loans (listed previously) are also excluded from the 504 loan program.

Loans are provided through Certified Development Companies. CDCs work with banks and other lenders to make loans in first position on reasonable terms, helping lenders retain growing

Big money for small business.



For more than 25 years, FoundationCapital (formerly Birmingham CityWide Local Development Company) has been the creative financing resource for small business in Birmingham. Now we're statewide. As a non-profit corporation, we administer the SBA 504 loan program financing long-term, fixed assets for start-ups and expansions. So for everything from buildings and land to new equipment, we can help you get the money to make your business grow in Alabama.



FoundationCapital

1500 1st Avenue North – Suite B108 Birmingham, Alabama 35203 T 205.250.6380 foundationcapital.biz

customers and provide Community Redevelopment Act credit.

The SBA 504 loan is distinguished from the SBA 7(a) loan program in these ways:

The maximum debenture, or long-term loan, is:

- \$5 million for businesses that create a certain number of jobs or improve the local economy;
- \$5 million for businesses that meet a specific public policy goal, including veterans; and
- \$5.5 million for manufacturers and energy public policy projects.

Recent additions to the program allow \$5.5 million for each project that reduces the borrower's energy consumption by at least 10 percent; and \$5.5 million for each project that generates renewable energy fuels, such as biodiesel or ethanol production. Projects eligible for up to \$5.5 million under one of these two requirements do not have to meet the job creation or retention requirement, so long as the CDC portfolio average is at least \$50,000.

- Eligible project costs are limited to long-term, fixed assets such as land and building (occupied by the borrower) and substantial machinery and equipment. Working capital is not an eligible use of proceeds.
- Most borrowers are required to make an injection (borrower contribution) of just 10 percent which allows the business to conserve valuable operating capital. A further injection of 5 percent is needed if the business is a start-up or new (less than 2 years old) and a further injection of 5 percent is also required if the primary collateral will be a single purpose building.
- Two-tiered project financing: a lender finances approximately 50 percent of the project cost and receives a first lien on the project assets (but no SBA guaranty); A CDC (backed by a 100% SBA-guaranteed debenture) finances up to 40% of the project costs secured with a junior lien. The borrower provides the balance of the project costs.
- Fixed interest rate on SBA loan. SBA guarantees the debenture 100 percent. Debentures are sold in pools monthly to private investors. This low, fixed rate is then passed on to the borrower and establishes the basis for the loan rate.
- All project-related costs can be financed, including acquisition (land and building, land and construction of building, renovations, machinery and equipment) and soft costs, such as title insurance and appraisals. Some closing costs may be financed.
- Collateral is typically a subordinate lien on the assets financed; allows other assets to be free of liens and available to secure other needed financing.



- Long-term real estate loans are up to 20-year term, heavy equipment 10 or 20-year term and are self-amortizing.

Businesses that receive 504 loans are:

- Small — net worth under \$8.5 million, net profit after taxes under \$3 million, or meet other SBA size standards.
- Organized for-profit.
- Most types of business — retail, service, wholesale or manufacturing.

The SBA's 504 certified development companies serve their communities by financing business expansion needs. Their professional staffs work directly with borrowers to tailor a financing package that meets program guidelines and the credit capacity of the borrower's business. For information, visit www.sba.gov/504.

Alabama Community Development Corp.

d/b/a (ALACOM)
Contact: Diane Roehrig, President
117 Southcrest Dr., Ste. 100
Homewood, AL 35209
205-942-3360 • 205-942-5984 Fax
alacom@worldnet.att.net
www.alacom.com
Area of Operation: Statewide

Alabama Small Business Capital

Contact: Angie Winter-Sweatman, Vice Pres.
1784 Taliaferro Tr., Ste. B
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-272-5355
angie@asbc504.com
Area of operation: Statewide

Foundation Capital

Contact: Bob Dickerson, Executive Director
1500 1st Ave. N., Ste. B108
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-250-6380 • 205-250-6384 Fax
info@bbrc.biz
www.foundationcapital.biz
Area of Operation: Statewide

Greater Mobile Development Corporation

Contact: Teresa Sands, Economic Dev. Coord.
Business Innovation Center
1301 Azalea Rd., Ste. 201
Mobile, AL 36693
251-650-0826 • 251-650-0827 Fax
Approved On: 12/28/92
P.O. Box 1827
Mobile, AL 36633
gmdc@ceebic.org
www.cityofmobile.org
Area of Operation: Statewide

Southern Development Council

8132 Old Federal Rd.
Montgomery, AL 36117-8007
334-244-1801 or 800-499-3034
334-244-1421 Fax
sdci@sdinc.org
www.sdinc.org
Area of Operation: Statewide

MICROLOAN PROGRAM

The Microloan program provides small loans ranging from under \$500 to \$50,000. Under this program, the SBA makes funds available to nonprofit intermediaries that, in turn, make the small loans directly to entrepreneurs, including veterans. Proceeds can be used for typical business purposes such as working capital, or the purchase of furniture, fixtures, machinery, supplies,

**FY 2010 TOP TEN LENDERS
IN THE STATE OF
ALABAMA**

1. Compass Bank
2. Wells Fargo Bank National Association
3. Cornerstonebank
- 3a. Superior Financial Group, LLC
4. Worthington Federal Bank
5. Borrego Springs Bank, N.A.
6. 1st National Bank - Brundidge
7. RBC Bank (USA)
8. Redstone FCU
9. Reliance Bank
10. Branch Bank & Trust Company

equipment, and inventory. Microloans may not be used for the purchase of real estate. Interest rates are negotiated between the borrower and the intermediary. The maximum term for a microloan is 7 years. For more information, go to www.sba.gov/microloans.

Birmingham Business Resource Center

1500 1st Ave. N., Ste. B108
Birmingham, AL 35203
Robert Dickerson Jr., Executive Director
info@bbrc.biz
www.bbrc.biz
205-250-6380 • 205-250-6384 Fax
Service Area: Jefferson County
Maximum Loan: \$7,500

Community Enterprise Investments, Inc.

302 N. Barcelona St.
Pensacola, FL 32501
Microloan Contact: Grover Brown or
Percy Goodman
rjemison@ceii-cdc.org
bigdanfla@aol.com
eljojr@aol.com
ceii2234@aol.com
www.ceii.pensacola.com
rjemison@ceii-cdc.org;
bigdanfla@aol.com; eljojr@aol.com;
ceii2234@aol.com
850-595-6234 or 888-605-2505 Toll Free
850-595-6264 Fax
Service Areas: Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour,
Butler, Bullock, Choctaw, Clarke, Coffee,
Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Dallas,
Escambia, Geneva, Greene, Henry, Houston,
Lee, Lowndes, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe,
Montgomery, Perry, Pike, Russell, Sumter,
Washington and Wilcox counties.

Seedco Financial-Alabama

Ivan Holloway, Vice President
Microlending: Herman Williams
505 N. 20th St., Ste. 1525
Birmingham, AL 35203
SFSinfo@seedco.org
www.seedcofinancial.org
205-715-2714 • 205-715-2711 Fax
Maximum Loan: \$35,000
Must have at least one year of business
operations.
Service Area: 15 Alabama Counties
Counties with metro cities identified in
parentheses are as follows:
Jefferson (Birmingham), Madison
(Huntsville), Mobile (Mobile),
Montgomery (Montgomery)
Tuscaloosa (Tuscaloosa), Choctaw, Dallas,
Greene, Hale, Lowndes, Macon, Perry
Pickens, Sumter, Wilcox

THE SURETY BOND GUARANTEE PROGRAM

The Surety Bond Guarantee program is a public-private partnership between the federal government and surety companies to provide small businesses with the bonding assistance necessary

for them to compete for public and private contracting and subcontracting opportunities. The guarantee provides all incentive for sureties to bond small businesses that would otherwise be unable to obtain bonding. The program is aimed at small businesses that lack the working capital or performance track record necessary to secure bonding on a reasonable basis through regular commercial channels.

Through this program, the SBA guarantees bid, payment, performance and ancillary bonds issued by surety companies for individual contracts and subcontracts up to \$2 million. The SBA reimburses sureties between 70 and 90 percent of losses sustained if a contractor defaults on the contract.

The SBA has two program options available, the Prior Approval Program (Plan A) and the Preferred Surety Bond Program (Plan B). In the Prior Approval Program, SBA guarantees 90 percent of surety's paid losses and expenses on bonded contracts up to \$100,000, and on bonded contracts greater than \$100,000

that are awarded to socially and economically disadvantaged concerns, HUBZone contractors, and veterans, and service-disabled veteran owned small businesses. All other bonds guaranteed in the Plan A Program receive an 80 percent guarantee. Sureties must obtain SBA's prior approval for each bond guarantee issued. Under Plan B, SBA guarantees 70 percent, but sureties may issue, monitor and service bonds without SBA's prior approval.

Alabama Surety Bonds, Inc.

14 Office Park Ctr. E., Ste. 105-A
Birmingham, AL 35223
205-871-9399 • 205-871-9403 Fax

The Securance Group

4216 Carmichael Rd.
Montgomery, AL 36106
800-239-5667 or 334-272-1200
334-277-6114 Fax

SBA LOANS MADE



The Southern Development Council is proud to be Alabama's leading provider of both SBA 504 loans and 7a loan packaging services. Make us your first call and let us help you ensure that your project gets the best financing package available.



www.sdcinc.org
1-800-499-3034
sdci@sdinc.org

An Alabama Non Profit Certified Development Company founded in 1983

Putting America Back to Work

THE SMALL BUSINESS JOBS ACT:

THE TOOLS SMALL BUSINESSES NEED

On Sept. 27, President Obama signed the Small Business Jobs Act, which is the most significant piece of small business legislation in over a decade. The Jobs Act provides entrepreneurs and small business owners with a toolbox that includes tax relief, access to capital, more contracting opportunities and exporting assistance, so they can grow and create the jobs America needs. So, whether you're starting a business or looking to grow, here are the facts you need to know to take advantage of all that's in the Small Business Jobs Act.

PROVIDING TAX RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

As tax season approaches, there are several new tax cuts that small business owners can take advantage of, including:

- The highest ever small business expensing limits—\$500,000 for 2010 and 2011
- Carry back for qualified small businesses of general business credits to offset five years of taxes
- Zero capital gains taxes on qualified stock investments in small businesses for the 2010 tax year
- Increased deductions for start-up expenditures for entrepreneurs for the 2010 tax year
- Easier deductions for employer-provided cell phones
- New deductions for health insurance costs for self-employed business owners and their family members
- Limits on penalties for errors in tax reporting that disproportionately affect small business
- Extended bonus depreciation

HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES GAIN ACCESS TO CAPITAL

Access to capital is one of the biggest concerns facing small businesses. You may have heard about the Jobs Act's extensions of the popular provisions which increased the guarantee on loans and reduced the borrower fees in our top two programs. This helped SBA turn \$505 million in taxpayer funds into \$12 billion in overall small business lending. This temporary provision has drawn to a close, but the Jobs Act made a number of changes to SBA lending which will help small businesses get the capital they need.

For small businesses like manufacturers, exporters, and franchises, that are ready to grow but need larger loans, the Jobs Act permanently increased the limits on SBA loans from \$2 million to \$5 million. This will help more small businesses who need capital use SBA loans. The Jobs Act also increases SBA microloan maximums from \$35,000 to \$50,000. SBA data shows that microloans often benefit entrepreneurs who need startup capital and business owners in underserved communities who often find it harder to access capital.

The Jobs Act contained two important temporary provisions. The limit on quick-turnaround SBA Express loans was increased from \$350,000 to \$1 million through September, 2011. And, the Jobs Act will soon temporarily allow owner-occupied small businesses to use SBA's 504 loan program to refinance their non-SBA commercial real estate mortgages. With a large percentage of commercial real estate mortgages set to mature in the next few years, many small business owners face the negative impact of declining real estate values. Allowing good, healthy small businesses to refinance their mortgages will help them keep their doors open and protect jobs, as well as get more stable, long-term mortgage financing.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES WIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Are you a government contractor? The Federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world. Last year, \$100 billion in Federal contracts went to small businesses. The Jobs Act contains provisions to help build on that and get more contracts in the hands of small businesses in 2011 and beyond.

For instance, the law reaffirmed “parity” among federal small-business contracting programs. When awarding contracts that are set-aside for small businesses, contracting officers are free to choose among businesses owned by women and service-disabled veterans, as well as businesses participating in HUBZone and 8(a) programs.

The law eliminates the “Competitiveness Demonstration” program, which limited opportunities for small contractors in 11 industries where they excel, such as construction, landscaping and pest control. This will build on the \$24 billion small businesses won in these industries in Fiscal Year 2009 (effective January 31, 2011).

The law gives contracting officers the ability to reserve orders for small business participation on contracts with multiple awards including the Federal Supply Schedule (GSA Multiple Award Schedule). The law makes it harder for agencies to “bundle” contracts, a practice that makes it more difficult for small businesses to compete.

The law establishes a legal standing of “presumption of loss” when a business misrepresents its ownership status or size in winning a government contract. This allows a federal agency to claim a loss on the purchase, enabling those agencies, including the Department of Justice, to vigorously pursue fraudulent firms.

The law holds large prime contractors more accountable to their own subcontracting plans by requiring written justification when plans aren’t met and when small business subcontractors aren’t paid on time. This helps eliminate “bait-and-switch” tactics that occur when large primes – after winning the prime contract – don’t follow through with their own plans to give subcontracts to small businesses.

Whether your small business has worked on government contracts for years, or you’re looking at contracting as a way to grow, there’s good news in the Jobs Act.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES GROW THROUGH EXPORTING

Small businesses are the sector of the economy that’s best poised for growth through exporting. With the growth in new technology, new markets are opening up small businesses all the time. And since the President has made it a priority to double the country’s exports, now is a perfect time to begin exporting. The Jobs Act makes growing your business through exporting easier than ever.

The loan limits in SBA’s International Trade Loans and Export Working Capital have been increased to \$5 million. These loans support small business exporters who need capital to invest in exporting and fill orders coming from overseas. Moreover, the Export Express Pilot is now a permanent, with 90% guarantees for loans up to \$350,000 and 75% for loans between \$350,000 and \$500,000. Lastly, the Jobs Act provides funding for competitive grants for states to help small business owners with exporting.

MORE TOOLS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

There are dozens and dozens of programs, resources, and tools to support your small business in the Small Business Jobs Act. From the new loan programs and tax cuts mentioned above, to the Treasury Department’s Small Business Lending Fund that will help many community banks around the country, you’re sure to find what you need to grow your business and create jobs. Your local SBA district office or resource partner can help you navigate the ins-and-outs of the Jobs Act, or you can get started by visiting www.SBA.gov.





LOAN GUARANTY PROGRAMS

(Information current as of October 2010 • All SBA programs and services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.)

U.S. Small Business Administration

Program	Maximum Amount	Percent of Guaranty	Use of Proceeds	Maturity	Maximum Interest Rates	Guaranty Fees	Who Qualifies	Benefits to Borrowers
7(a) Loans								
7(a) Basic	\$5 million gross	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Expansion/renovation; new construction, purchase land or buildings; purchase equipment, fixtures, lease-hold improvements; working capital; refinance debt for compelling reasons; seasonal line of credit, inventory	Depends on ability to repay. Generally working capital & machinery & equipment (not to exceed life of equipment) is 5-10 years; real estate is 25 years.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Must be for profit & meet SBA size standards; show good character, credit, management, & ability to repay. Must be an eligible type of business.	Long-term financing; Improved cash flow; Fixed maturity; No balloons; No prepayment penalty (under 15 years)
SBAExpress Lender approves. Minimal SBA paperwork.	\$1 million (Temporary)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	May be used for revolving lines of credit (up to 7 year maturity) or for a term loan (same as 7(a)).	See 7(a)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	See 7(a)	Faster turnaround; Streamlined process; Easy-to-use line of credit
Community Express. Lender approves. Minimal SBA paperwork.	\$250,000	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	May be used for revolving lines of credit (up to 7 year maturity) or for a term loan (same as 7(a)).	See 7(a)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	HUBZones; LMI areas; All loans of \$25,000 or less	Faster turnaround; Streamlined process; Easy-to-use line of credit Technical assistance provided
Patriot Express Lender approves loan. Minimal additional SBA paperwork.	\$500,000	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	See 7(a)	See 7(a)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	See 7(a). In addition, small business must be owned & controlled by one or more of the following groups equaling 51% total ownership: veteran, active-duty military, reservist or National Guard member or a spouse of any of these groups, or a widowed spouse of a service member or veteran who died during service or of a service connected disability.	Lower interest rate maximums than other SBA Express programs Less paperwork Fast turnaround Expanded eligibility Electronic application
CAPLines: Short-term/Revolving Lines of Credit; Seasonal Contract Builders Standard/ Small Asset-Based	\$5 million (small asset based limited to \$200,000)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Finance seasonal working capital needs; cost to perform; construction costs, advances against existing inventory and receivables, consolidation of short-term debts.	Up to 5 years	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	See 7(a) Existing business	Funds short-term working capital; Various lines of credit; Allows business to obtain contracts; Larger in size for business growth; Can be used to create current assets; Can be used to finance existing current assets
International Trade	\$5 million (see your SBA District Office for details about adding working capital to this loan.)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	IT loan must be used only for the acquisition of long-term, fixed assets. A separate working-capital loan may be used for working capital needs associated with international trade.	Up to 25 years.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Small businesses (see 7(a) for qualifications) engaged/preparing to engage in international trade/adversely affected by competition from imports.	Long-term financing for land and building where assets are used to produce products for export.
Export Working Capital Program 1-page application, fast turnaround, may apply for prequalification letter.	\$5 million (may be combined with International Trade loan)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Short-term, working-capital loans for exporters	Matched single transaction cycle or generally 1 yr. for line of credit.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Small businesses 7(a) for other qualifications, those who need short-term working capital.	Short-term working capital for export needs; Inexpensive minimum guaranty fee 1/4 of 1%; Revolving or transaction based; Allows specific financing for exporting without disrupting domestic financing & business plan
Non-7(a) Loans								
Microloans Loans through non-profit lending organizations; technical assistance also provided.	\$50,000 (total loan amount to small business borrower)	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Purchase machinery & equipment, fixtures, lease-hold improvements; finance increased receivables; working capital. Cannot be used to repay existing debt.	Shortest term possible, not to exceed 6 years	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Same as 7(a) except non-profit day care	Direct loans from non-profit intermediary lenders; Fixed-rate financing; Very small loan amounts; Technical assistance available
504 Loans Provided through Certified Development Companies (CDCs) which are licensed by SBA.	504 loan maximum amount ranges from \$5 million to \$5.5 million depending on type business.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Long-term, fixed-asset loans; Lender (non-guaranteed) financing secured by first lien on project assets. 504 loan provided from SBA 100% guaranteed debenture sold to investors at fixed rate secured by 2nd lien.	504 Loan: 10- or 20-year term; Lender (unguaranteed) financing may have a shorter term.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	Check with local SBA District Office for current information.	For profit businesses that do not exceed \$8.5 million in tangible net worth and do not have average net income over \$3 million for past 2 years.	Fees under 3%; Long-term fixed rate; Low down payment; Full amortization; no balloons

CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES FEDERAL PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES

How to Apply for Government Contracts

The U.S. government is the largest single purchaser of goods and services in the world, buying everything from armored tanks to paper clips. Every year, the federal government awards more than \$500 billion in contracts, and a significant share of those contracts are specifically allotted to small businesses.

The SBA works with agencies to award at least 23 percent of all prime government contracts to small businesses, with specific statutory goals for small disadvantaged businesses, women-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, or located in historically underutilized business zones (HUBZone).

The agency ensures that small businesses have access to long-lasting development opportunities, which means working with small businesses to help them stay competitive, as well as encouraging federal agencies to award more contracts to small businesses. The SBA features outreach programs, matchmaking events, and online training opportunities; and helps agencies identify opportunities for small businesses.

HOW GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING WORKS

Sealed bidding vs. Negotiation

There are two methods the government uses to purchase goods and services, sealed bidding and negotiation. The first method, sealed bidding, involves issuing an invitation for bid by a procuring agency. Under the sealed bidding method, a contract is usually awarded to the lowest priced bidder that can meet the quantity, quality and delivery requirements of the procurement. The second method, negotiation, involves issuing a request for proposal or request for quotation. The business with the best proposal in terms of technical content, price and other factors generally wins the contract.



Types of Contracts

Firm fixed price contracts place the responsibility for the costs and risk of loss on the contractor. Firm fixed price contracts do not permit any adjustment on the basis of the contractor's costs during the performance of the contract. This type of contract is used in all sealed bid and some negotiated procurements.

Cost reimbursement contracts provide for the payment of allowable costs incurred by the contractor, to the extent stated in the contract. The contract establishes a ceiling price, above which a contractor may not exceed without the approval of the contracting officer. Cost reimbursement contracts are used in research contracts that have commercial applicability.

Some contracts do not fit neatly into these two categories, such as time and material contracts (prices for hourly wages are fixed but the hours are estimated) and letter contracts (authorizes a contractor to begin work on an urgent requirement).

Small Business Set-Asides

A "set-aside" for small businesses reserves an acquisition exclusively for small business concern participation. There are two ways in which set-asides can be determined. First, if an acquisition of goods or services has an anticipated dollar value of at least \$3,000 but not exceeding \$100,000, it is automatically reserved for small businesses. The acquisition will be set aside only if the contracting officer determines there are two or more responsible small business concerns that are competitive in terms of market prices, quality and delivery. Second, if an acquisition of goods or services is more than \$100,000, and if it's likely offers will be obtained from at least two responsible small business concerns, and if awards will be made at fair market prices, the acquisition is reserved for exclusively for small business concerns. Reasonable expectations of small business competition may be evaluated using past acquisition history of an item or similar items.



There are several exceptions and unique rules for specific kinds of small businesses and industries. For R&D small business set-asides, there must be reasonable expectation of obtaining from small businesses the best scientific and technological sources consistent with the demands of the proposed acquisition. For small business set-asides other than for construction services, any concern proposing to furnish a product that it did not itself manufacture must furnish the product of a small business manufacturer unless the SBA has granted either a waiver or exception to this requirement. In industries where the SBA finds that there are no small business manufacturers, it may issue a waiver to the non-manufacturer rule. Waivers permit small businesses to provide any domestic firm's product.

Subcontracting

Subcontracting opportunities are a great resource for small businesses, especially to those not ready to bid as prime contractors. Experience gained from subcontracting with a federal prime contractor can better prepare businesses to bid for prime contracts.

Current regulations stipulate for contracts offering subcontracting opportunities over \$650,000 for goods and services, or \$1.5 million for construction, large business prime contractors must offer maximum practicable subcontracting opportunities to small businesses. Large business prime contractors must submit a subcontracting plan describing how they will successfully subcontract to small businesses.

To find subcontracting opportunities, a list of Federal prime contractors is available through SBA's Subcontracting Directory at www.sba.gov and www.gsa.gov. Research the list of prime contractors and determine which are

best suited for your business. Develop a marketing strategy, and then contact the Small Business Liaison Officer listed for each prime to schedule an appointment.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY PROGRAM

The Certificate of Competency program allows a small business, that is the apparent successful offeror, to appeal a contracting officer's non-responsibility determination that it is unable to fulfill the requirements of a specific government contract. The SBA will conduct a detailed review of the firm's technical and financial capabilities to perform on the contract. If the business demonstrates the capability to perform, the SBA issues a Certificate of Competency to the contracting officer, requiring award of that contract to the small business.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS

To be eligible to bid on a federal contract, you must know your business. Answer the following three questions:

1. Are you a small business?

Is your small business:

- Organized for profit?
- Located in the U.S.?
- Operated primarily within the U.S. or making a significant contribution to the U.S. economy through payment of taxes or use of American products, materials, or labor?
- Independently owned and operated?
- Not dominant in the field of operation in which it is bidding for government contracts?
- A sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or any other legal form?

If the first six criteria apply to your business, ask yourself the second important question to find out if your business meets size standard requirements.

2. What is the size standard for your business?

Size standards are used to determine whether a business is small or "other than small". Size standards vary depending upon the industry. To determine the size standard for your business, you will need a NAICS code. Every federal agency uses these codes when considering your business. To determine your NAICS code, go to www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/

Some SBA programs require their own unique size standards. To find out more about these requirements and other size standard information, go to www.sba.gov/size

3. Do you fall under a specific certification?

Under the umbrella of "small business," SBA has outlined several specific certifications that businesses may fall under. These certifications are divided into two categories: SBA-Certified and Self-Certified.

The SBA-Certified Programs were created to assist specific businesses in securing federal contracts and therefore can only be issued by SBA administrators. For the Self-Certified Programs, you can determine for yourself if your business meets the requirements by referring to the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR).

Just as Congress has given federal agencies a goal of procuring 23 percent of federal contracts from small businesses, so too must federal agencies meet specific contracting goals for other categories of small firms. These goals are:

- 5 percent of contracts go to Small Disadvantaged Businesses
- 5 percent go to Women-Owned Small Businesses
- 3 percent go to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses
- 3 percent go to HUBZone Small Businesses

Federal agencies have a strong incentive to fulfill these contracting goals. You should apply for those SBA-Certified and Self-Certified programs for which you qualify to take advantage of contracting opportunities.

HUBZone

The HUBZone program helps small businesses located in distressed urban and rural communities, known as Historically Underutilized Business Zones, gain access to federal set-aside contracts and, sole source contracts as well as a price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions. There is a statutory requirement that

HUBZone small business concerns be awarded not less than 3 percent of the total value of all prime contract awards. The HUBZone program also establishes preference for award of federal contracts to small businesses in these areas. To qualify for the program, a business (except tribally-owned concerns) must meet the following criteria:

- It must be a small business by SBA size standards
- It must be owned and controlled at least 51% by U.S. citizens, or a Community Development Corporation, an agricultural cooperative, or an Indian tribe
- Its principal office must be located within a "Historically Underutilized Business Zone," which includes lands considered "Indian Country" and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act
- At least 35% of its employees must reside in a HUBZone.

Existing businesses that choose to move to qualified areas are eligible to apply for certification. To fulfill the requirement that 35 percent of a HUBZone firm's employees reside in a HUBZone, employees must live in a primary residence at a place for at least 180 days, or as a currently registered voter, and with intent to live there indefinitely.

SBA is responsible for:

- Determining whether or not individual concerns are qualified HUBZone small business concerns;
- Maintaining a list of qualified HUBZone small business concerns for use by acquisition agencies in awarding contracts under the program;
- Adjudicating protests and appeals of eligibility to receive HUBZone contracts.

For additional information, visit www.sba.gov/hubzone.

8(a) BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The 8(a) Business Development program is a nine year program established to assist eligible socially and economically disadvantaged individuals develop and grow their businesses. Business development assistance includes one-to-one counseling, training workshops, and other management and technical guidance. There is a statutory requirement that small disadvantaged business concerns be awarded not less than 5 percent of the total value of all prime contract awards. All firms that become eligible for SBA's 8(a) business development assistance are also considered small disadvantaged business

concerns for federal contracting. To be eligible for the 8(a) Business Development program, a business must meet the following criteria:

- It must be a small business by SBA size standards;
- It must be owned (at least 51 percent) by one or more individuals who qualify as socially and economically disadvantaged, and who are US citizens of good character;
- It must be controlled, managed, and operated by one or more individuals who qualify as disadvantaged, and;
- It must demonstrate potential for success (generally by being in business for at least two full years) before applying.

Socially disadvantaged individuals are those who have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias because of their identity as a member of a group without regard to their individual capabilities. The following individuals are presumed to be socially disadvantaged: Black Americans, Native Americans, American Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts, or Native Hawaiians, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. An individual who is not a member of one of these groups must establish individual social disadvantage by a preponderance of evidence. Economically disadvantaged individuals are socially disadvantaged individuals whose ability to compete in the free-enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business who are not socially disadvantaged.

Firms owned by Alaska Native Corporations, Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian Organizations, and Community Development Corporations can also apply to the SBA for 8(a) business development assistance.

So that approved firms can obtain training, counseling, and business development assistance, SBA designates a staff person at a local SBA District Office, geographically near the business.

SBA is responsible for

- Determining whether a business qualifies for the 8(a) Business Development program
- Determining whether a business continues to qualify, during the nine-year term.
- Approving Mentor/Protégé agreements between 8(a) firms and large businesses.

For additional information, visit www.sba.gov/8a.

SDB

An SDB (Small Disadvantaged Business) is defined as a small business that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

There is a federal-government wide goal of awarding at least 5 percent of prime contracting dollars to SDBs each year. Large prime contractors must also establish a subcontracting goal for SDBs in their Subcontracting Plans.

Firms self-certify as SDB for without submitting any application to SBA, however firms approved by SBA into the 8(a) Business Development program are automatically certified as an SDB. To self-certify, firms should update their CCR profiles and update their ORCA profiles, making sure that both profiles reflect their SDB status.

SDVOSB

The SDVOSB (Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business) program has a federal government-wide goal of awarding at least 3 percent of prime and subcontracting dollars to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses each year. Large prime contractors must also establish a subcontracting goal for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses in their Subcontracting Plans. These subcontracting goals are reviewed at time of proposal by both the contracting officer and SBA prior to the award of a contract.

The SDVOSB Protest is administered by SBA to ensure that only businesses owned by service-disabled veterans receive contracts reserved exclusively for them. When a business's SDVOSB self-certification is challenged, SBA determines if the business meets the status, ownership, and control requirements.

To determine your eligibility, contact your local veterans business development officer, visit the various program websites, or contact SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development at www.sba.gov/vets.

For more information on certifications not described in depth here, refer to the glossary of terms.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Once you have identified the important information regarding your business, it is time to start the process of procuring a government contract. Take these necessary steps to begin the bidding process:

1. Identify your DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number

To register your business, obtain a DUNS number used to identify and track millions of businesses. You can obtain your free DUNS number when registering with the CCR (Central Contractor Registration) at www.ccr.gov or by contacting Dun & Bradstreet at www.dnb.com.

2. Identify your EIN (Employer Identification Number)

An EIN, otherwise known as a federal tax identification number, is generally required of all businesses. For more information, go to www.irs.gov.

3. Identify your NAICS and SIC codes

The NAICS and SIC codes are used to classify the industry a particular business occupies. To register your business, supply at least one code. Refer to the Glossary for more information.

4. Register with the CCR

The CCR is an online government-maintained database of companies wanting to do business with the federal government. Agencies search the database for prospective vendors. The CCR is at www.ccr.gov.

After completing registration, you will be asked to enter your small business profile information through the SBA Supplemental Page. The information will be displayed in the Dynamic Small Business Search.

Creating a profile in CCR and keeping it current ensures your firm has access to federal contracting opportunities. Entering your small business profile, including your business information and key word description, allows contracting officers, prime contractors, and buyers from state and local governments to learn about your company.

5. Use ORCA

Prospective contractors must complete (electronically or through submission of paperwork), representations and certifications for small business size and program status as part of the process that registers your business for federal contracting opportunities. To make this process easier for everyone involved, the government developed ORCA (Online Representations and Certifications Application), where generally, businesses can complete all of the paperwork online. To begin this process, first register your firm in CCR, then go to www.orca.bpn.gov.

6. Register with the GSA Schedule

The GSA (Government Services Administration) Multiple Award Schedule (aka Federal Supply Schedule) is used by GSA to establish long-term, government-wide contracts with commercial firms. Once these contracts are established, government agencies can order the supplies and services they need directly from the firms through the use of an online shopping tool. Becoming a GSA schedule contractor increases your opportunity for contracts across all levels of government. Businesses interested in becoming GSA schedule contractors should review the information available at www.gsa.gov/schedules.

7. Make Sure Your Business is Financially Sound

This critical step is absolutely necessary to make sure that your business is financially prepared for the journey ahead. Even if you are able to obtain a government contract, you will not be receiving all of the money at once. It helps to have a clear plan of how your business will stage the benefits of the contract.

8. Search FedBizOpps for contracting opportunities

Federal Business Opportunities, or FedBizOpps, is an online service operated by the federal government that announces available business opportunities. FedBizOpps helps identify the needs of federal agencies and available contracting opportunities. To begin searching for contracting opportunities, go to www.fbo.gov.

9. Marketing Your Business

Registering your business is not enough to obtain a federal contract: you will need to market your business to attract federal agencies. Tips for good marketing are:

- o Determine which federal agencies buy your product or service, and get to know them
- o Identify the contracting procedures of those agencies
- o Focus on opportunities in your niche and prioritize

Although not required, you may want to obtain a PSC (Product Services Code) and/or a FSC (Federal Supply Classification). These codes provide additional information about the services and products your business offers.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

SBA has a variety of services and resources that can provide you with more information and coach you through the necessary steps to take in order to be successful in your search for a government contract.

1. The 8(a) Business Development Program

The 8(a) Business Development Program provides development support to small businesses that are economically and/or socially disadvantaged. To find out more, go to www.sba.gov/8a.

2. The Mentor Protégé Program

The Mentor Protégé Program encourages approved mentors to provide various forms of business assistance to eligible 8(a) participants as protégés to improve their ability to compete in the public and private marketplaces successfully. To find out more, go to www.sba.gov/mentor-protége.

3. Online Training Programs

SBA's Small Business Training Network is a virtual campus complete with courses and programs to help the small business owner. The free, 30-minute course, "Business Opportunities: A Guide to Winning Federal Contracts," is a good introduction for businesses looking to obtain a contract with the federal government. To view this course, among others, go to www.sba.gov/training.

4. Online Podcasts

To make help even more accessible, SBA has podcasts on a variety of topics that will provide more specific information on SBA, government contracting, and small businesses. To access these podcasts, go to www.sba.gov/training and select the topic you want to learn more about.

5. Counseling Services

SBA has a variety of counseling services aimed at targeting the various needs of small business owners. Some of the counseling services we offer are:

- o SBA district offices: These offices can provide general information about SBA and government contracts.
- o SBDCs (Small Business Development Centers): SBDCs provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners in the form of both information and guidance.
- o WBCs (Women's Business Centers): WBCs exist to help women entrepreneurs, especially women who are economically and/or socially disadvantaged, start and grow their own business. This is achieved through comprehensive training and counseling on a vast array of topics in many languages.
- o SCORE - Counselors to America's Small Business: One of SBA's resource partners, SCORE is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping entrepreneurs and small business start, grow, and succeed nationwide.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- o Office of Veterans Business Development: The Office of Veterans Business Development aims at maximizing the availability, applicability, and usability of SBA programs for Veterans, Service-Disabled Veterans, Reserve Component Members, and their dependents or survivors.

To find the locations of these offices, or to learn more, go to www.sba.gov/sba-direct.

6. Procurement Resources

There are three main resources available for procurement concerns:

- o PTACs (Procurement Technical Assistance Centers): PTACs provide assistance to businesses that want to sell products and services to federal, state, and/or local government. To find a PTAC in your state, go to www.dla.mil/db/procurem.htm.
- o PCRs (Procurement Center Representatives) and CMRs (Commercial Marketing Representatives): PCRs work to increase the small business share of federal procurement awards. CMRs offer many services to small businesses, including counseling on how to obtain subcontracts. To find a PCR or CMR near you, go to www.sba.gov/sba-direct.

Additional Online Resources

- **Department of Defense** (The DoD is the largest purchaser of goods from small businesses): www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu
- **Office of Federal Procurement Policy:** www.whitehouse.gov/omb/procurement
- **Acquisition Forecast:** www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts/index.html
- **Federal Supply Schedule (FSS):** www.gsa.gov
- **GSA Center for Acquisition Excellence:** www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103487

8(a): The 8(a) Business Development Program assists eligible socially and economically disadvantaged individuals develop and grow their business. There is a federal government-wide goal of awarding at least 5 percent of contracting dollars to small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs); and firms approved into the 8(a) BD program are automatically certified as an SDB. Businesses that usually have been in existence for at least two years may be eligible for the nine-year program that includes counseling, training, and potential federal procurement opportunities.

CCR (Central Contractor Registration):

The CCR is an online government-maintained database of companies wanting to do business with the federal government. Agencies search this database for prospective vendors. To register with the CCR, go to www.ccr.gov.

FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulations):

The FAR is the book of official acquisition regulations by which government programs are defined and federal agencies determine the awarding of contracts. To view the complete FAR, go to www.acquisition.gov/far.

GCBD (Government Contracting and Business Development):

The Office of Government Contracting and Business Development is an office within SBA that aims to enhance the effectiveness of small business programs by developing policies, regulations, and statutory changes. Please refer to the official website at www.sba.gov/contracting.

HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zone):

HUBZones are SBA-designated geographic regions that have been historically underutilized. There is a federal government-wide goal of awarding at least 3 percent of contracting dollars to small businesses in HUBZones. In order to be eligible for the HUBZone program, businesses must have their headquarters located in a HUBZone and 35 percent of their employees must reside in a HUBZone.

NAICS (North American Industry Classification):

NAICS codes are six-digit numbers that are used to classify the industry a particular business occupies. You will need at least one NAICS code to

complete your registration, but be sure to list as many as apply. You may also add or change NAICS codes at any time. To find your NAICS code, visit www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html.

Mentor Protégé Program: The SBA-sponsored Mentor Protégé Program is a subset of the 8(a) Business Development program. Mentor firms are paired with protégé firms to provide managerial and technical assistance to compete successfully for federal contracts. For more information, go to www.sba.gov/8a.

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned: The Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business program is a subset of the Veteran-Owned Small Business program, and has a federal government-wide goal of awarding at least 3 percent of prime and subcontracting dollars to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses each year.

SIC (Standard Industrial Classification):

SIC codes are four-digit numbers that are used to classify the industry a particular business occupies. While NAICS codes have largely replaced SIC codes, you will still need to provide your SIC code. SIC codes can be found at www.osha-slc.gov/pls/imis/sicsearch.html.

Veteran-Owned: A veteran-owned small business is defined as one that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more veterans; or, in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more veterans and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more veterans. For more information, go to www.sba.gov/vets.

Women-Owned: A woman-owned small business is defined as one that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more women; or, in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more women and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women. There is a federal goal of awarding at least 5 percent of contracting dollars to women-owned small businesses each year. For more information, go to www.sba.gov/wosb.

DISASTER RECOVERY & DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Knowing the Types of Assistance Available for Recovery



The disaster program is SBA's largest direct loan program, and the only SBA program for entities other than small businesses. SBA is responsible for providing affordable, timely and accessible financial assistance to homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private, nonprofit organizations following declared disasters. By law, governmental units and agricultural enterprises are ineligible.

The SBA is authorized by the Small Business Act to make two types of disaster loans:

Physical Disaster Loans

Physical Disaster Loans are the primary source of funding for permanent rebuilding and replacement of uninsured or underinsured disaster-caused damages to privately-owned real and/or personal property. SBA's physical disaster loans are available to homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations of all sizes. A homeowner may apply for a loan of up to \$200,000 to repair or replace the primary residence to its pre-disaster condition. Homeowners or renters may apply for a loan up to \$40,000 to help repair or replace personal property, such as clothing, furniture or automobiles, lost in the disaster. Businesses and private, nonprofit organizations of any size may apply for a loan up to \$2 million (actual loan amounts are based on the amount of uncompensated damage) to repair or replace real property, machinery, equipment, fixtures, inventory and leasehold improvements.

Economic Injury Disaster Loans

Economic injury disaster loans provide the necessary working capital after a declared disaster until normal operations resume. The law restricts economic

injury disaster loans to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and private nonprofit organizations of all sizes. The loan limit for economic injury, as a direct result of the disaster event, is \$2 million. These working capital loans are intended to be made to entities without credit elsewhere, as determined by SBA, to help pay ordinary and necessary operating expenses that would have been payable barring the disaster event. The limit for physical and EIDL loans combined is \$2 million.

Military Reservists Economic Injury Disaster Loans, a type of economic injury loan, are available for up to \$2 million to assist eligible small businesses meet their ordinary and necessary operating expenses that they could have met, but are unable to meet, because an essential employee was "called up" to active duty in his/her role as a military reservist. These loans are intended to provide only the amount of working capital needed by a small business to pay its necessary obligations as they mature until operations return to normal after the essential employee is released from active military duty.

For all disaster loans, SBA can only approve loans to applicants having a credit history acceptable to SBA and who also show the ability to repay the loans. The terms of each loan are established in accordance with each borrower's ability to repay. The law gives SBA several powerful tools to make disaster loans affordable: low-interest rates (around 4 percent), long-terms (up to 30 years), and refinancing of prior liens (in some cases). As required by law, the interest rate for each loan is based on SBA's determination of whether each applicant does or does not have credit available elsewhere (the ability to borrow or use their own resources to overcome the disaster).

More information on all of SBA's disaster assistance programs, including information for military reservists, is available at www.sba.gov/disaster.

Disaster Preparedness

For small businesses, surviving a disaster doesn't begin with clearing the debris and returning to work.

Surviving begins long before the disaster strikes, or before active-duty orders are received – with proper planning. Your planning should include insurance coverage, emergency power, protection of company records, fire safety, medical emergencies, taking care of your employees and continuity planning – how your business will continue during and after the emergency or disaster.

Starting is as easy as clicking on the SBA's Web site at www.sba.gov/prepare. The site includes a wealth of information on the SBA's disaster recovery programs for homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private, nonprofit organizations. There are articles on emergency planning for disasters, descriptions of SBA's programs, and links to government and industry Web sites with great planning information.

Additionally, to help small businesses with their preparedness planning, SBA has teamed up with Agility Recovery Solutions to encourage small businesses to take the necessary steps to protect their employees, important records and their business assets. SBA and Agility have partnered to provide an educational tool for small business owners via the Prepare My Business Web site (www.preparemybusiness.org).

As small businesses are leading America's economic recovery, many of them are investing time and money into their plans to grow and create jobs. Developing a strong disaster preparedness plan should be a critical and integral piece of those efforts. Planning for a disaster is the best way of limiting its effects.

Other helpful sites include:

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - www.ready.gov

Red Cross Ready Rating Program - www.readyrating.org and www.redcross.org

ADVOCACY WATCHING OUT FOR YOU

The SBA is Your Voice in Washington



OFFICE OF ADVOCACY

The SBA's Office of Advocacy, the "small business watchdog" of the government, examines the role and status of small business in the economy and independently represents the views of small business to federal agencies, Congress, the President and federal appellate courts as friends of the court. Advocacy compiles and interprets statistics on small business and is the primary entity within the federal government to disseminate small business data.

Headed by the Chief Counsel for Advocacy, the office also funds outside research of small business issues and produces numerous publications to inform policy makers about the important role of small business in the economy and the impact of government policies on small business. In addition, the office monitors federal agency compliance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act – the law that requires agencies to analyze the impact of their proposed regulations on small entities (including small businesses, small governmental jurisdictions and small

nonprofit organizations), and consider regulatory alternatives that minimize the economic burden on small entities.

Advocacy's mission is enhanced by a team of regional advocates, located in the SBA's 10 regions. They are Advocacy's direct link to small business owners, state and local government entities, and organizations that support the interests of small entities. The regional advocates help identify regulatory concerns of small business by monitoring the impact of federal and state policies at the grassroots level.

Learn more about the Office of Advocacy at www.sba.gov/advo.

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN

If excessive fines, penalties or unfair regulatory enforcement by federal agencies are problems for your small business, you have a voice in Washington, D.C., through the SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman receives comments regarding federal regulatory enforcement from small business

owners, nonprofit organizations and small government entities. Comments are forwarded to federal agencies for review, and in some cases fines may be lowered or eliminated and decisions changed in favor of the small business owners. Each year the National Ombudsman files a report with the U.S. Congress on the responsiveness of federal agencies regarding their actions of regulatory and compliance enforcement on small businesses.

To request help, send the National Ombudsman a complete Federal Agency Comment Form. You may do this by fax at 202-481-5719; online at the Ombudsman's Web page www.sba.gov/ombudsman; or by mail at 409 Third Street S.W., Mail Code 2120, Washington, DC 20416.

The Ombudsman also coordinates 10 Regional Regulatory Fairness Boards which meet regularly to receive comments about federal regulations affecting small businesses.

Learn more about the National Ombudsman from the Web site above or call 888-REG-FAIR.

OTHER ASSISTANCE

Other Sources of Assistance

INTERNATIONAL TRADE RESOURCES

Department of Commerce
International Trade Division
950 22nd St. N., Ste. 737
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-731-1331 • 205-731-0076 Fax
www.buyUSA.com/alabama

ALABAMA INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER (AITC)

The University of Alabama
Brian Davis, Director
P.O. Box 870396
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0396
205-348-7621 • 205-348-6974 Fax
aitc@ua.edu
www.aitc.ua.edu

U.S. EXPORT ASSISTANCE CENTER

Ray Gibeau, Regional Manager
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404-897-6089 • 404-897-6085 Fax
raymond.gibeau@sba.gov

EXPORT LEGAL ASSISTANCE NETWORK (ELAN)

<http://www.export-legal-assistance.org/>
Get the answers to your export legal questions from the Export Legal Assistance Network (ELAN). Exports can mean big profits for a small business. But when you're just starting out, tariffs, regulatory requirements, distributorship agreements and other legal matters can be a little intimidating. The Export Legal Assistance Network program can help you over these first hurdles.

EXPORT IMPORT BANK

811 Vermont Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20571
202-565-3200 • 202-565-3210 Fax

FOREIGN TRADE ZONES

www.foreign-trade-zone.com

BIRMINGHAM FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #98

Office of Economic Development
710 20th St. N., 3rd Fl., City Hall
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-259-2799
www.informationbirmingham.com

HUNTSVILLE FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #83

Huntsville-Madison County
Airport Authority
2850 Wall Triana Hwy., Ste. 301
Huntsville, AL 35824
256-772-3105 • 256-772-3106 Fax

MOBILE FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #82

2062 Old Shell Rd.
Mobile, AL 36607
251-471-6725 • 251-471-6727 Fax

ANNISTON FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #211

c/o Foreign Trade Zone Corporation
P.O. Box 6241
Huntsville, AL 35824-0241
256-772-3105 (Huntsville)

MONTGOMERY FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #222

Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 79
Montgomery, AL 36101
334-834-5200

U.S. CUSTOMS

www.customs.gov

PORT DIRECTOR

U.S. Customs Service
P.O. Box 320127
Birmingham, AL 35212
205-731-1464 • 205-731-8192 Fax

PORT DIRECTOR

U.S. Customs Service
P.O. Box 6085
Huntsville, AL 35824
256-772-3404 • 256-772-3404 Fax

PORT DIRECTOR

U.S. Customs Service
P.O. Box 2748
Mobile, AL 36652
251-441-5106 • 251-441-6061 Fax

Other Resources

STATE OF ALABAMA DIVISION OF PURCHASING

RSA Union Bldg.
100 North Union St., Ste. 192
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-242-7250

CONSUMER RESPONSE CENTER

Federal Trade Commission
Consumer Response Center
600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Rm. H-130
Washington, DC 20580
202-382-4357 • 202-362-2012 Fax

COUNCIL OF BETTER BUSINESS BUREAUS, INC.

1411 K St., N.W., 10th Fl.
Washington, DC 20005-3404
<http://www.bbb.org>

CHIEF POSTAL INSPECTOR

ISOSG
222 S. Riverdale Plaza, Ste. 1250
Chicago, IL 60606
www.usps.com/websites/dep/inspect

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

dandrew@inetdirect.net
www.drugfreeworkplace.com

TREE PLANTING INFORMATION

Neil Letson, State Urban Forestry Coord.
Alabama Cooperative Ext. System
P.O. Box 302550
Montgomery, AL 36130-2550
334-240-9360
www.aces.edu/ucf
nletson@aces.edu

ALABAMA NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

James Harwell, Executive Director
P.O. Box 9
Auburn, AL 36831
334-821-5148 • 334-821-9111 Fax
www.alna.org

ALABAMA URBAN FORESTRY ASSOCIATION

205-226-7760 or 877-548-0440 Toll Free
205-226-3046 Fax
www.info@aufa.com

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

P. O. Box 302550
Montgomery, AL 36130
334-240-9300 • 334-240-9390 Fax
800-436-8568 TTY
www.forestry.state.al.us

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

License Board
2525 Fairlane Dr.
Montgomery, AL 36116
334-272-5030 • 334-395-5336 Fax
www.genconbd.state.al.us

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

1849 C St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20245
202-208-3711

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SELF-EMPLOYED (NASE)

P.O. Box 612067, DFW Airport
Dallas, TX 75261-2067
800-232-6273
www.nase.org

BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Small Business Institute for Safety and Health Training
351 N. Broad St.
Mobile, AL 36603-5898
251-690-6801
www.bishop.edu
The Institute assists small businesses in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. This program was designed to provide site-specific guidance to employers with fewer than 250 employees.

STATE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

P.O. Box 303025
Montgomery, AL 36130-3025
334-242-4103 • 334-242-4113 Fax
www.shpda.state.al.us
To establish a nursing home, a Certificate of Need must be obtained.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

201 Monroe St., #1552
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-206-5200
www.adph.org

STATE OF ALABAMA DIVISION OF PURCHASING

100 N. Union St., Ste. 6
Montgomery, AL 36104

DIVISION OF ENFORCEMENT

Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20580
202-326-2222 • 202-326-3197 Fax
www.ftc.gov/bcp/rn
To receive a 5-digit Registration Number (RN) for labels for textile manufacturing.

ALABAMA BAR ASSOCIATION

415 Dexter Ave.
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-269-1515 • 334-261-6310 Fax
www.alabar.org
If you need assistance in obtaining an attorney.

FOR COMPANIES TO QUALIFY TO ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS CONTACT:

Visa/Mastercard - Bank of Account
American Express
800-445-2639
Discover Card
800-347-6673

FOR AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT DOCUMENTS AND GENERAL INFO

800-514-0301 or 800-514-0383
(or for TDD access, use your local relay service)
www.ada.gov

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)

Alabama State Director:
Rosemary Elebash
7550 Halycom Summit Dr.
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-264-2261
www.nfib.com

Regional Planning Commissions

The Regional Planning Commissions operate a revolving loan fund (RLF) for the purpose of assisting small business and industries in their start-up and expansion activities. The goal of the program is to create new jobs for citizens of Alabama. The RLF provides gap financing that is not available from commercial lenders. For more information, contact one of the following:

AL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

Leigh Moore-Jones, State Director
5900 Carmichael Place
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-277-2221 • 334-277-3899 Fax
www.alarc.org

OTHER ASSISTANCE

ALABAMA TOMBIGBEE REGIONAL COMMISSION

John Clyde Riggs, Director
107 Broad St.
Camden, AL 36726
334-682-4234 • 334-682-4205 Fax

BIRMINGHAM REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

2112 11th Ave. S.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-251-8139

CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Bill Tucker, Executive Director
430 South Court St.
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-262-4300 • 334-262-6976 Fax

EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Bill Curtis, Executive Director
1130 Quintard Ave., Ste. 300/P.O. Box 2186
Anniston, AL 36202
800-239-6741 or 256-237-6741
256-237-6763 Fax

LEE/RUSSELL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Suzanne G. Burnette, Exe. Director
2207 Gateway Dr.
Opelika, AL 36801
334-749-5264 • 334-749-6582 Fax

NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

C. Ron Matthews, Executive Director
216 Suction St. S.E.
Decatur, AL 35601
256-355-4515 • 256-351-1380 Fax

NORTHWEST ALABAMA COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Keith Jones, Executive Director
P.O. Box 2603
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662
256-389-0555 • 256-389-0599 Fax

SOUTH ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Russ Wimberly, Director
110 Beauregard St./P.O. Box 1665
Mobile, AL 36633
251-433-6541 • 251-433-6009 Fax

SOUTH CENTRAL ALABAMA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Tyson Howard, Executive Director
5900 Carmichael Place
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-244-6903 • 334-270-0038 Fax

SOUTHEAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thomas B. Solomon, Executive Director
P.O. Box 1406
Dothan, AL 36302
334-794-4093 • 334-794-3288 Fax

TOP OF ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Bob Culver, Executive Director
5075 Research Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35805
256-830-0818 • 256-830-0843 Fax

WEST ALABAMA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Robert B. Lake, Executive Director
4200 Hwy. 69 N., Ste. 1
Northport, AL 35473
205-333-2990 • 205-333-2713 Fax

Small Business Incubators

Small business incubators, which provide comprehensive support to companies in their start-up stages, help entrepreneurs achieve their dreams and help communities develop more vibrant economies. The incubation process begins with an analysis of what a company needs and ends with that company "graduating" to become solid and independent. In between, the company receives tailor-made services that point it toward success. For additional information, contact one of the following:

AUBURN CENTER FOR DEVELOPING INDUSTRIES

Peggy Hinson, Manager
1500 Pumphrey Ave.
Auburn, AL 36832
334-501-7300
phinson@auburnalabama.org

BESSEMER BUSINESS CENTER

Devron Veasley, Director
1020 9th Ave. S.W.
Bessemer, AL 35022
205-481-2000 • 205-481-2100 Fax
dveasley@mindspring.com
www.bessemeral.org/BBIS.html

BESSEMER BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTER

The Downtown Entrepreneurial Center
Devron Veasley, Director
401 19th St. N.
Bessemer, AL 35020
205-481-4800 • 205-481-4801 Fax
dveasley@mindspring.com
www.bessemeral.org/BBIS.html

BEVILL STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Jasper Campus
Kim Ennis
1411 Indiana Ave.
Jasper, AL 35501
205-387-0511 • 205-387-5191 Fax
rgreen@bscc.edu

BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER

Lynn Stacey, Executive Director
1301 Azalea Rd.
Mobile, AL 36693
251-660-7002 • 251-660-7004 Fax
ceebic@ceebic.org
www.ceebic.org

BIZTECH BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY DEV. CENTER, INC.

Dick Reeves, President
515 Sparkman Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35816
256-704-6000 • 256-704-6002 Fax
info@biztech.org
www.biztech.org

DECATUR BUSINESS INCUBATOR

Jim Gregory, Executive Director
1629 4th Ave. S.W.
Decatur, AL 35601
256-351-7563 • 256-351-7984 Fax
dbi@decatur-al.gov
www.decaturingincubator.com

ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER

Susan Matlock, President
110 12th St. N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-250-8000 • 205-250-8013 Fax
smatlock@entrepreneurialctr.com
www.entrepreneurialctr.com

MONTGOMERY AREA SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

Douglas Jones, Director
600 S. Court St.
Montgomery, AL 36101
334-832-4790 • 334-240-6869 Fax
djones@montgomerychamber.com
www.montgomeryincubator.org

NORTHEAST ALABAMA ENTREPRENEURIAL SYSTEM

Giles McDaniel, Executive Director
1400 Commerce Blvd., Ste. 1
Anniston, AL 36207
256-831-5215 • 256-831-8728 Fax
giles@neaes.org
www.neaes.org

OZARK TECHNOLOGY CENTER (OTC)

Robin Beasley, Assistant Econ. Director
3269 U.S. Hwy. 231 S.
Ozark, AL 36360
334-774-4952 • 334-774-4539 Fax
otcdirector@ozarkalabama.org
www.ozarkalabama.org

SHOALS COMMERCIAL CULINARY CENTER

Sherry Campbell, Director
610 W. College St.
Florence, AL 35630
256-764-0044 • 256-764-5999 Fax
scampbell@shoalsec.com
www.shoalsec.com

SHOALS ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER (SEC)

H. Giles McDaniel, Executive Director
3115 Northington Ct.
Florence, AL 35630
256-760-9014 • 256-740-5530 Fax
jdavis@shoalsec.com
www.shoalsec.com

SHOALS ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER - DIGITAL ARTS SHOALS COMPLEX

Jerry Davis, Director
501 Little Rock Ave.
Sheffield, AL 35660
256-314-1750 • 256-314-1751 Fax
jdavis@shoalsec.com
www.shoalsec.com

SHOALS ENTERPRENEURIAL CENTER - JERRY W. DAVIS COMPLEX FOR MANUFACTURING

4002 Helton Dr.
Florence, AL 35630
www.shoalsec.com

THE INNOVATION CENTRE, INC.

George Alford, Director
4344 Alabama Hwy. 41
Selma, AL 36701
334-418-0005 • 334-418-0010 Fax
galford@alfordandassoc.com

BALDWIN COUNTY INCUBATOR

Bob Higgins, Director
P.O. Box 1340
Robertsdale, AL 36567
251-947-2445 or 800-947-2445
251-947-4229 Fax
info@baldwinincubator.com
www.baldwinincubator.com

State Resources

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (ADECA)

Bill Johnson, Director
Center for Commerce Bldg.
401 Adams Ave., Ste. 580
P.O. Box 5690
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690
334-242-5591 • 334-242-5099 Fax
office.of.the.director@adeca.state.al.us
www.adeca.state.al.us

OFFICE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (OMBE) STATE OF ALABAMA

Clarence E. Mann, Manager
401 Adams Ave., Ste. 410
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690
334-353-5680 • 334-242-4203 Fax
Clarence.Mann@adeca.alabama.gov
www.adeca.alabama.gov/c15/omb/default.aspx

OFFICE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (OMBE) STATE OF ALABAMA

Mobile Office:
Pam Ramos
251-433-2250

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Onis "Trey" Glenn III, Director
1400 Coliseum Blvd. (36110-2059)
P.O. Box 301463
Montgomery, AL 36130-1463
334-271-7700 • 334-271-7950 Fax
www.adem.state.al.us

OTHER ASSISTANCE

ALABAMA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Industrial Relations Bldg.
649 Monroe St., Rm. 2813
Montgomery, AL 36131
334-242-8003 • 334-242-8012 Fax
www.es.dir.alabama.gov

ALABAMA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Byron McCain, Executive Director
P.O. Box 130220
Birmingham, AL 35213
205-802-7551 • 205-802-7553 Fax
byron.mccain@alabama-infotech.org
www.alabama-infotech.org

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

P.O. Box 55268
Birmingham, AL 35255-5268
205-558-2222 • 205-558-2239 Fax
info@birmingham-al.bbb.org
www.birmingham-al.bbb.org
Serving Central Alabama and the Wiregrass Area.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

500 12th St. (31901)/P.O. Box 2587
Columbus, GA 31902-2587
706-324-0712 • 706-324-2181 Fax
info@columbus-ga.bbb.org
www.columbus-ga.bbb.org
Serving West Georgia, East Alabama and Southwest Georgia.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Dothan Branch Office
118 Woodburn
Dothan, AL 36305
334-794-0492 • 334-794-0659 Fax
www.birmingham-al.bbb.org

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

P.O. Box 383
Huntsville, AL 35804-0388
256-533-1640 • 256-533-1177 Fax
info@northalabama.bbb.org
www.northalabama.bbb.org/
Serving Northern Alabama.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

3361 E. Cottage Hill Rd.
Mobile, AL 36606
P.O. Box 91419
Mobile, AL 36691-1419
info@bbbsouthal.org
251-433-5494 • 251-438-3191 Fax
www.bbbsouthal.org
Serving Southern Alabama.

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Montgomery Branch Office
500 Eastern Blvd., Ste. 128
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-273-5530 • 334-273-5546 Fax
www.bbb.org
Consumer Affairs

CONSUMER PROTECTION

800-392-5658

OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS DIVISION

334-242-7334

Minority Resources

CENTRAL ALABAMA AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2324 Second Ave. N., Ste. 100
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-323-1877

NORTH ALABAMA AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

225 Spragins St., Ste. E
Huntsville, AL 35801
256-564-7574 • 256-564-7344 Fax
www.thenaaacc.org

URBAN LEAGUE OF BIRMINGHAM

1229 3rd Ave. N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-326-0162 • 205-521-6951 Fax
urbanleag@aol.com
www.birminghamurbanleague.net

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

John Huffman, Coordinator
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
1409 Coliseum Blvd.
Montgomery, AL 36130-3050
334-242-6534 • 334-263-7586 Fax
thomasc@dot.state.al.us
www.dot.state.al.us/

ALABAMA INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Eloise Josey, Executive Director
777 Lawrence St., Ste. 102
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-242-2831 • 334-240-3408 Fax
aiac@mindspring.com
www.aiac.state.al.us

OFFICE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (OMBE) STATE OF ALABAMA

Clarence E. Mann, Manager
401 Adams Ave., Ste. 410
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690
334-353-5680 • 334-242-4203 Fax
Clarence.Mann@adeca.alabama.gov
www.adeca.alabama.gov/c15/ombe/default.aspx

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCACY (OSBA)

Eddie F. Postell, Manager
649 Monroe St., Ste. 2455
Industrial Relations Bldg.
Montgomery, AL 36131
334-242-0485 or 800-248-0033
334-353-1741 Fax
Eddie.Postell@ado.alabama.gov
www.alabamausa.org

SOUTH REGIONS MINORITY BUSINESS COUNCIL

Scott Vowels, Executive Director
4715 Alton Ct.
Birmingham, AL 35210
205-957-1882 or 205-957-1883
205-957-2114 Fax
info@srmcbc.org
www.srmcbc.org

Chambers of Commerce

Chambers of Commerce serve as a central location where the local small business community may obtain information, publications and contact information. For more information check listing of area Chambers or visit:
www.chamberofcommerce.com.

ABBEVILLE CoC

P.O. Box 202
Abbeville, AL 36310-0202
334-585-2273

ALABAMA GULF COAST AREA CoC

P.O. Drawer 3869
Gulf Shores, AL 36547
251-968-6904 • 251-968-5332 Fax
mberson@gulftel.com
www.alagulfcoastchamber.com

ALBANYVILLE CoC

316 E. Sand Mountain Dr./P.O. Box 1457
Albertville, AL 35950
256-878-3821 • 256-878-3822 Fax
Albertvillechamber@charter.net

ALEXANDER CITY/LAKE MARTIN AREA CoC

120 Tallapoosa St./P.O. Box 926
Alexander City, AL 35011
256-234-3461 • 256-234-0094 Fax
www.alexandercity.org

ALICEVILLE AREA CoC

P.O. Drawer A
Aliceville, AL 35442
205-373-2820 • 205-373-8692 Fax
commerce@pickens.net
www.pickens.net/commerce

ANDALUSIA AREA CoC

P.O. Box 667
Andalusia, AL 36420-0667
334-222-2030 • 334-222-7844 Fax
dreeves@andalusiachamber.com

ARAB CoC

P.O. Box 626
Arab, AL 35016
256-586-3138 • 256-586-0233 Fax
arabchamber@charter.net
www.arabalabama.org

ASHFORD AREA CoC

P.O. Box 463
Ashford, AL 36312
334-899-4769 • 334-899-3033 Fax

GREATER LIMESTONE COUNTY CoC

P.O. Box 150
Athens, AL 35612
256-232-2600 • 256-232-2609 Fax
alcc@pcngt.net
www.tourathens.com

ATMORE CoC

501 S. Pensacola Ave.
Atmore, AL 36502-2953
251-368-3305 • 251-368-0800 Fax
atmoreal@frontiernet.net
www.atmorechamber.com

AUBURN CoC

P.O. Box 1370
Auburn, AL 36831-1370
334-887-7011 • 334-821-5500 Fax
www.auburnchamber.com
info@auburnchamber.com

BAYOU LA BATRE CoC

P.O. Box 486
Bayou La Batre, AL 36509
251-824-4088 • 251-824-4133 Fax
www.gulfinfo.com/bayoulabatre

BESSEMER AREA CoC

321 N. 18th St.(35020)/P.O. Box 648
Bessemer, AL 35021
205-425-3253 • 205-425-4979 Fax
mmilan1@bellsouth.net
www.bessemerchamber.com

BIBB COUNTY CoC

P.O. Box 25
Centreville, AL 35042
205-926-5222 • 205-926-5221 Fax
bibbco@dbtech.net
www.bibbco@dbtech.net

BIRMINGHAM REGIONAL CoC

505 20th St. N., 2nd Fl.
Birmingham, AL 35203
205-241-8136 • 205-241-8138 Fax
www.birminghamchamber.com

BLOUNT COUNTY/ONEONTA CoC

227 2nd Ave. E.
Oneonta, AL 35121-1487
205-274-2153 • 205-274-2099 Fax
www.blountoneontachamber.org

BOAZ CoC

P.O. Box 563
Boaz, AL 35957
256-593-8154 • 256-593-1233 Fax
www.boazchamberofcommerce.com

BREWTON CoC

101 B Douglas Ave.
Brewton, AL 36426
251-867-3224 • 251-809-1793 Fax
www.brewtonchamber.com

CALERA CoC

Hwy. 31/P.O. Box 445
Calera, AL 35404
205-668-3023 • 205-668-3023 Fax
info@calerachamber.org
www.calerachamber.org

CALHOUN COUNTY CoC

1330 Quintard Ave.
Anniston, AL 36202
256-237-3536 • 256-237-0126 Fax
www.calhouncchamber.com

CENTRAL BALDWIN CoC

P.O. Box 587
Robertsdale, AL 36567
251-947-5932 • 251-947-2626 Fax
cbchamber@gulftel.com
www.cbchamber.org

OTHER ASSISTANCE

THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF WALKER COUNTY

204 19th St. E., Ste. 101
Jasper, AL 35501
205-384-4571 • 205-384-4901 Fax
walkcham@sonet.net
www.walkerchamber.us

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF WEST AL

2200 University Blvd.
Tuscaloosa, AL 35402
205-758-7588 • 205-391-0565 Fax
www.tuscaloosachamber.com

CHEROKEE COUNTY CoC

P.O. Box 86
Centre, AL 35960
256-927-8455 • 256-927-2768 Fax
www.cherokee-chamber.org

CHICKASAW CoC

P.O. Box 11421
Chickasaw, AL 36671
251-456-4751
www.ci.chickasaw.al.us/content/commerce

CHILDERSBURG CoC

805 3rd St. S.W./P.O. Box 527
Childersburg, AL 35044
256-378-5482 • 256-378-5833 Fax
chamber1540@aol.com
www.childersburg.com

CHILTON COUNTY CoC

500 5th Ave. N./P.O. Box 66
Clanton, AL 35046-0066
205-755-2400 • 205-755-8444 Fax
info@chiltoncountychamber.com
www.chiltoncountychamber.com

CITRONELLE AREA CoC

8175 State St.
Citronelle, AL 36522
251-866-7733 • 251-866-7982 Fax
info@citronellechamber.com
www.citronellechamber.com

CLAY COUNTY CoC

P.O. Box 85
Lineville, AL 36266
256-396-2828 • 256-396-5532 Fax
www.claycochamber.com

CLEBURNE COUNTY CoC

P.O. Box 413
Heflin, AL 36264
256-463-2222 • 256-463-3982 Fax
Aberry@nti.net

CULLMAN AREA CoC

P.O. Box 1104
Cullman, AL 35056-1104
256-734-0454 • 256-737-7443 Fax
www.cullmanchamber.org
info@cullmanchamber.org

DADEVILLE AREA CoC

185 S. Tallassee St., Ste. 103
Dadeville, AL 36853
256-825-4019 • 256-825-0547 Fax
www.dadeville.com

DALEVILLE CoC

P.O. Box 688
Daleville, AL 36322
334-598-6331 • 334-598-2333 Fax
www.dalevilleal.com

DECATUR MORGAN COUNTY CoC

515 6th Ave. N.E.
Decatur, AL 35602-2003
256-353-5312 • 256-353-2384 Fax
www.dcc.org

DEMOPOLIS AREA CoC

102 E. Washington St./P.O. Box 667
Demopolis, AL 36762
334-289-0270 • 334-289-1382 Fax
www.demopolischamber.com

DOTHAN AREA CoC

102 Jamestown Blvd./P.O. Box 638
Dothan, AL 36302
334-792-5138 or 800-221-1027
334-794-4796 Fax
www.dothan.com

EAST WALKER COUNTY CoC

P.O. Box 188
Sumiton, AL 35148
205-255-0202
cheevee@bellsouth.net

EASTERN SHORE CoC

327 Fairhope Ave.
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www.eschamber.com

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Elba, AL 36323
334-897-3125 • 334-897-1762 Fax
elbaalabama.net
www.ecc@alaweb.com

ENTERPRISE CoC

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334-347-0581 • 334-393-8204 Fax
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Eufaula, AL 36072
334-687-6664 • 334-687-5240 Fax
800-524-7529 Toll Free
ebcchamber@bellsouth.net
www.eufaula-barbourchamber.com

EUTAW AREA CoC

110 Main St./P.O. Box 31
Eutaw, AL 35462
205-372-9002 • 205-372-9974 Fax
www.greenecountyalabama.com

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100 Depot Sq.
Evergreen, AL 36401
251-578-1000

FAIRFIELD CoC

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Fairfield, AL 35064

FAYETTE AREA CoC

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Fayette, AL 35555
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Flomaton, AL 36441
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251-296-1930 Fax

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Fort Payne, AL 35968-0125
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www.fortpayne.com

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www.franklincountychamber.org

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Gardendale, AL 35071
205-631-9195 • 205-631-9034 Fax
gdalechamber@mindspring.com
www.gardendalechamberofcommerce.com

GORDO AREA CoC

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Gordo, AL 35466
205-364-7870 (answering machine)
205-364-7383 Fax

GREATER GENEVA AREA CoC

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334-684-6582 • 334-684-2943 Fax
geneva_chamber@entercomp.com
www.entercomp.com/users/geneva_chamber/

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205-956-3104 • 205-956-5964 Fax
www.irondalechamber.org

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www.leedsalabama.com/chamber_of_commerce.htm

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Pell City, AL 35125
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www.cityofpellcity.com

GREATER SHELBY COUNTY CoC

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Pelham, AL 35124-0324
205-663-4542 • 205-663-4524 Fax
info@shelbychamber.org
www.shelbychamber.org

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www.talladegachamber.com

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www.greatervalleyarea.com

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P.O. Box 634
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www.haleychamber.org

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256-773-4370 • 256-773-4379 Fax
hartsell@hiwaay.net
www.hartsellechamber.com

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P.O. Box 236
Headland, AL 36345-0236
334-693-3303
headlandchamber@centurytel.net

HOMEWOOD CoC

c/o Homewood Public Library
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Homewood, AL 35209
205-871-5631 • 205-871-5632 Fax
www.homewoodchamber.org

HOOVER CoC

3659 Lorna Rd., Ste. 165
Hoover, AL 35216
205-988-5672 • 205-988-8383 Fax
www.hooverchamber.org

OTHER ASSISTANCE

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Hueytown, AL 35023
205-491-8039 • 205-491-7961 Fax
www.hueytown.org/chamber.htm

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225 Church St. N.W./P.O. Box 408
Huntsville, AL 35804-0408
256-535-2000 • 256-535-2015 Fax
hcc@hsvchamber.org
www.hsvchamber.org

JACKSON COUNTY AREA CoC

500 Commerce St.
Jackson, AL 36545
251-246-3251 • 251-246-3213 Fax
jacksonchamber@earthlink.net

LAKE GUNTERSVILLE CoC

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www.lawrenceal.com
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251-433-6951 • 251-432-1129 Fax
www.mobilechamber.com

MONROEVILLE AREA CoC

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251-743-2879 • 251-743-2189 Fax
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720 Oak St.
Montevallo, AL 35115
205-665-1519
www.montevallocc.org

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334-834-5200 • 334-265-4745 Fax
www.montgomerychamber.com

MOUNTAIN BROOK CoC

3928 Montclair Rd., Ste. 128
217 County Club Park/PMB 432
Mountain Brook, AL 35213
205-871-3779 • 205-871-6678 Fax
mtnbrookchamber@mindspring.com

NORTH BALDWIN CoC

P.O. Box 310
Bay Minette, AL 36507
251-937-5665 • 251-937-5670 Fax
www.northbaldwinchamber.com

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334-745-4861 • 334-749-4740 Fax
www.opelika.com

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Opp, AL 36467-0148
334-493-3070 • 334-493-1060 Fax
www.oppchamber.com

OZARK AREA CoC

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Ozark, AL 36360
334-774-9321 or 800-582-8497
334-774-8736 Fax
ozarkcc@snowhill.com

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P.O. Box 95
Marion, AL 36756
334-683-9622
pinebelt.net/~pcchamber/index2.html

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www.percchamber.com

PIKE COUNTY CoC

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334-566-2294 • 334-566-2298 Fax
www.pikecountychamber.com

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www.rainsville-al.com

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www.ircusa.com/randolph/county.htm

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205-375-6240 • 205-375-6240 Fax

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Saraland, AL 36571
251-675-4444 • 251-675-2307 Fax
www.saralandcoc.com

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P.O. Box 973
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256-259-5500 • 256-259-4447 Fax
www.sjcchamber.org

SELMA-DALLAS COUNTY CoC

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334-875-7142 Fax
www.selmaalabama.com

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www.shelbychamber.org

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www.shoalschamber.com

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www.southbaldwinchamber.com

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205-596-3378 • 205-596-3787 Fax

SOUTH SHELBY CoC

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205-669-9075 • 205-669-1842 Fax
soshelby@bellsouth.net

SPRINGVILLE AREA CoC

6496 U.S. Hwy. 11
Springville, AL 35146
205-467-2339
spvlib@alltel.net

SYLACAUGA CoC

P.O. Box 185
Sylacauga, AL 35150
256-249-0308 • 256-249-0315 Fax
chamber@sylacauga.net
www.sylacauga.net/chamber

TALLASSEE CoC

301-A King St.
Tallassee, AL 36078-1315
334-283-5151
chamber@tallassee.al.us
www.tallassee.al.us/chamber.htm

TARRANT/PINSON VALLEY CoC

145 Adams Ave.
Tarrant, AL 35217
205-849-2803 • 205-849-2805 Fax

THOMASVILLE CoC

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334-636-6623 • 334-636-6624 Fax
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www.tvilicity.com

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Mobile, AL 36619
251-666-2846 • 251-666-2813 Fax

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www.gtcom.net/~tricity/

TRUSSVILLE AREA CoC

225 Parkway Dr.
Trussville, AL 35173
205-655-7535 • 205-655-3705 Fax
trusscoc@hiwaay.com

TUSKEGEE AREA CoC

121 S. Main St.
Tuskegee, AL 36083
334-727-6619 • 334-725-1801 Fax
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205-695-7718 • 205-695-1006 Fax

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